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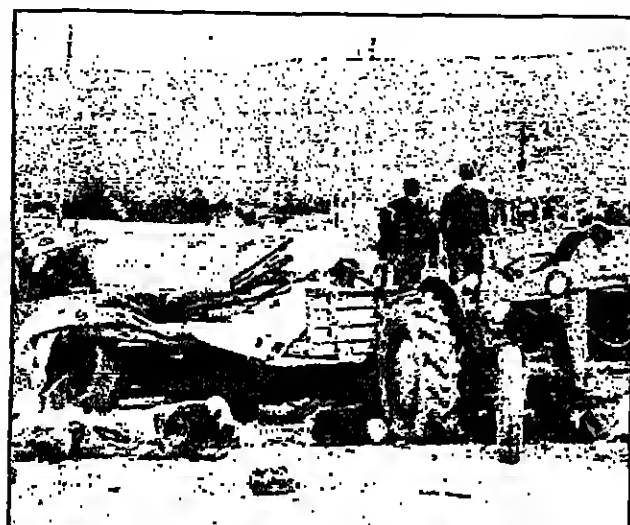
FRIDAY 16 APRIL 1999

(IR50p) 45p

THE INFORMATION DAILY
BRITAIN'S BEST ENTERTAINMENT GUIDE
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DIGITAL, CABLE AND SATELLITE LISTINGS REVIEW P15-18

TOMORROW
PETER MANDELSON
ANSWERS YOUR QUESTIONS
(SUCH AS: WHEN WILL YOU RETURN TO TONY'S CABINET?)

'This is a horror story. There is no other way to describe it'



Yugoslav police at the scene of the tragedy yesterday

THIS IS a horror story. There are no other words for it. It is the story of a series of massacres along a road lined with torched houses and cherry blossom, of smouldering skeletons and women cut in half, of a man's head lying in a field with the wind blowing his brown hair against the grass, and of corpses lying in a squalid hospital nearby.

Nato did all this, say the Serbs, and it is true that US munitions litter the road and fields around here, sometimes within a few inches of corpses, body parts, human bones, smashed tractors and trailers, their pathetic contents of old clothes, pots and family snapshots lying around them.

Clearly there were air strikes here. And Nato appears to be responsible for an atrocity.

But we saw other dark and terrible things on the road between Djakovica and Prizren yesterday afternoon. Busloads of terrified Kosovo Albanians, women and children and old men, peering from behind black curtains as they were driven east; row after row of burnt out houses, some of them still burning, a few only recently set on fire.

And several of the dead along the road appeared to have been attacked by machine-gun fire.

The Serbs say that 74 Albanian refugees were massacred on this road on Wednesday afternoon. And I counted 20 corpses - or parts of bodies - in three bombing locations along a 12-mile stretch of highway, and in the mortuary at Prizren, where a half-naked woman and a tiny girl covered in blood lay on the floor partly covered in shrouds.

Esmer Sulja, whose sister-in-



ROBERT FISK
IN TEVZICKI MOST

law was in the mortuary, told journalists brought here by Serb officials that he came from the Kosovo village of Malice and was told to move "for his own safety" three weeks ago to Dobros.

On Wednesday, he says he was driving his tractor containing 35 people in the trailer from Djakovica to Prizren when planes began dropping bombs around him.

The 46-year-old man, who had lacerations on his face, told us from his hospital bed that five of the passengers had been killed in the trailer.

There were terrible scenes along the road, for the Serbs had left many of the bodies where they were found. A grey-haired old man lay cut in half in a tree, six corpses, including that of a young woman, lay in brightly coloured clothes in a field where they had been dragged after the air raid. I found a human head 50 metres away and skeletons burnt out in the back of another trailer.

The munitions parked along the road bore several American markings. One bomb part was marked "for use on MK82" and was marked assembly 9621Aassy78-201872, with a date of manufacture of March 1978. A missile circuit board contained the code fchem872110.



A young refugee at a makeshift camp in Kukes, Albania yesterday. He was in the column, fleeing Kosovo, that was attacked by Nato jets

Dylan Martinez/Reuters

Nato apologises for convoy deaths

NATO APOLOGISED yesterday for attacking a column of Albanian refugees in Kosovo on Wednesday, killing at least 60 people, in what may prove the first big test of Western public support for the Balkan air campaign.

The Serbian authorities seized the opportunity of a propaganda windfall, dropped their ban on journalists in Kosovo and rushed foreign reporters to the scene of the carnage to interview wounded survivors under Serb supervision.

And although Nato admitted US pilots based in Italy did hit what they thought were military

convoys near the western Kosovo town of Djakovica, questions remain unanswered over who was responsible for the machine-gunned bodies strewn along the Prizren-Djakovica road.

Nato played a tape-recording from the debriefing of an F-15 pilot who said he made two passes over a three-vehicle convoy near Djakovica and fired a laser-guided bomb at the lead vehicle on his third pass. The pilot said he saw villages burning below and attacked what he thought were Yugoslav

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army vehicles engaged in the ethnic cleansing of the region. The pilot, whose name was not released, said on the tape: "I make a decision at that point that these are the people responsible for burning down the villages that I've seen so far. I go in, put my system on the lead vehicle and execute a laser-

guided bomb attack on that vehicle, destroying the lead vehicle."

The Nato account still did not dovetail with the Serbian video footage showing mangled bodies next to a column of tractors and trailers.

In Washington and London, leaders said they would not be

derailed by the "one tragic accident" from prosecuting an intensified air campaign against the forces of the Yugoslav leader, Slobodan Milosevic.

The Prime Minister, Tony Blair, said: "We regret these things deeply when they happen but that should not make us flinch from placing responsibility for this conflict squarely on the shoulders of Milosevic, who has begun this conflict."

Robin Cook, the Foreign Secretary, added: "How dare they [the Serbs] produce crocodile tears for people killed in the conflict for which they themselves are responsible."

The White House said Nato would continue the air campaign into midsummer if necessary if the Serbs continued to drive the Albanians from Kosovo. The US Defense Secretary William Cohen said the campaign could go on for months and added: "This is not going to be quick or easy or neat."

Nato yesterday attacked army barracks in Belgrade and other cities. Serbian state television transmitters and more bridges. US Apache attack helicopters are arriving in Albania and the aircraft carrier HMS *Invincible* has taken up position in the Adriatic.

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Austria	Ac\$5.00	Italy	US\$10.00
Belgium	B\$10.00	Latvia	US\$10.00
Canada	C\$5.50	Malta	US\$10.00
Cyprus	C\$1.20	Netherlands	US\$10.00
Czech Republic	K\$12.00	Norway	US\$10.00
Denmark	D\$10.00	Paraguay	US\$10.00
Finland	F\$10.00	Poland	US\$10.00
France	F\$10.00	Spain	US\$10.00
Germany	D\$10.00	Sweden	US\$10.00
Greece	G\$10.00	Switzerland	US\$10.00
Hungary	H\$10.00	Turkey	US\$10.00
		USA	US\$10.00

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VINCE VAUGHN ANNE HECHT

THREE BEST FRIENDS
ONE IS AN ARRESTED FOR POSSESSION
WOULD YOU LET HIM PAPER IN
SHARE THE FUNDS WITH YOU?

RETURN TO PARADISE

ALAN HAVES 7-DAY SCHEDULE

WOLFELOWTON

Channel 4

Channel 5

6.00 5 News and Sport on Channel 5, 7.00 5 News and Sport on Channel 5, 7.30 5 News and Sport on Channel 5, 8.00 5 News and Sport on Channel 5, 8.30 5 News and Sport on Channel 5, 9.00 5 News and Sport on Channel 5, 9.30 5 News and Sport on Channel 5, 10.00 5 News and Sport on Channel 5, 10.30 5 News and Sport on Channel 5, 11.00 5 News and Sport on Channel 5, 11.30 5 News and Sport on Channel 5, 12.00 5 News and Sport on Channel 5, 12.30 5 News and Sport on Channel 5, 1.00 5 News and Sport on Channel 5, 1.30 5 News and Sport on Channel 5, 2.00 5 News and Sport on Channel 5, 2.30 5 News and Sport on Channel 5, 3.00 5 News and Sport on Channel 5, 3.30 5 News and Sport on Channel 5, 4.00 5 News and Sport on Channel 5, 4.30 5 News and Sport on Channel 5, 5.00 5 News and Sport on Channel 5, 5.30 5 News and Sport on Channel 5, 6.00 5 News and Sport on Channel 5, 6.30 5 News and Sport on Channel 5, 7.00 5 News and Sport on Channel 5, 7.30 5 News and Sport on Channel 5, 8.00 5 News and Sport 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A pilot saw blazing villages, then a convoy. Seconds later, he fired

REFUGEE TRAGEDY

BY ANDREW BUNCOMBE

EIGHTY-ONE YEAR-OLD Dibrani Asmani had been on the road for three days in Kosovo, edging ever closer to the Albanian border he hoped would offer safety.

Instead, early on Wednesday afternoon, the world exploded around him and Mr Asmani's family disappeared before his eyes. "Suddenly there was a big blast, and I started running," said Mr Asmani, leaning on his walking stick.

"All I could think was, my God, Nato is bombing us. I ran through the field like a mouse. I'm ashamed, but I'm too old to lie about it."

More than 36 hours after one or more convoys of Kosovan refugees was hit by bombs from Nato planes, details are slowly emerging about exactly what happened between 1pm and 3pm on a road near Djakovica in south-west Kosovo.

Perhaps because of a lack of facts, or because there is no reliable information, at least two versions of what happened have emerged.

What is without doubt is that Nato planes bombed the very refugees they were trying to help - people like Mr Asmani. Nato called it a tragic accident.

The tragedy began to unfold just after midday on Wednesday when an attack team of American F-16 strike aircraft armed with laser-guided bombs, took off from their base in Aviano, in northern Italy.

Their mission was to fly over south-west Kosovo, specifically over towns where Serb MUP (interior ministry) police - those responsible for the past month's ethnic cleansing - had been spotted, and over areas known to be "strategic supply routes" for the Yugoslav military machine.

Flying at 15,000ft, out of reach of anti-aircraft artillery and most hand-held surface-to-air missiles, the pilot in the lead aircraft was passing over open country between the village of

Decani and the town of Djakovica. From the cockpit of the single-seat aircraft he saw the ground beneath dotted with villages that had been set on fire. Three, four, he counted, all recently set alight and still burning and all, he presumed, the work of the MUP.

Then, passing over a dirt road that linked the two settlements, he saw movement on the ground. Looking closer he saw what he thought was a 60-vehicle convoy of vehicles. At the front of the convoy were three green trucks.

"I saw three uniformly shaped dark green vehicles, look like deuce-and-a-half (two and a half-ton) troop-carrying vehicles," the pilot said, on a tape played to reporters yesterday by Nato.

"They came to a stop at the next house down the road. I am convinced now that that's [army and police] forces working their way down toward Djakovica."

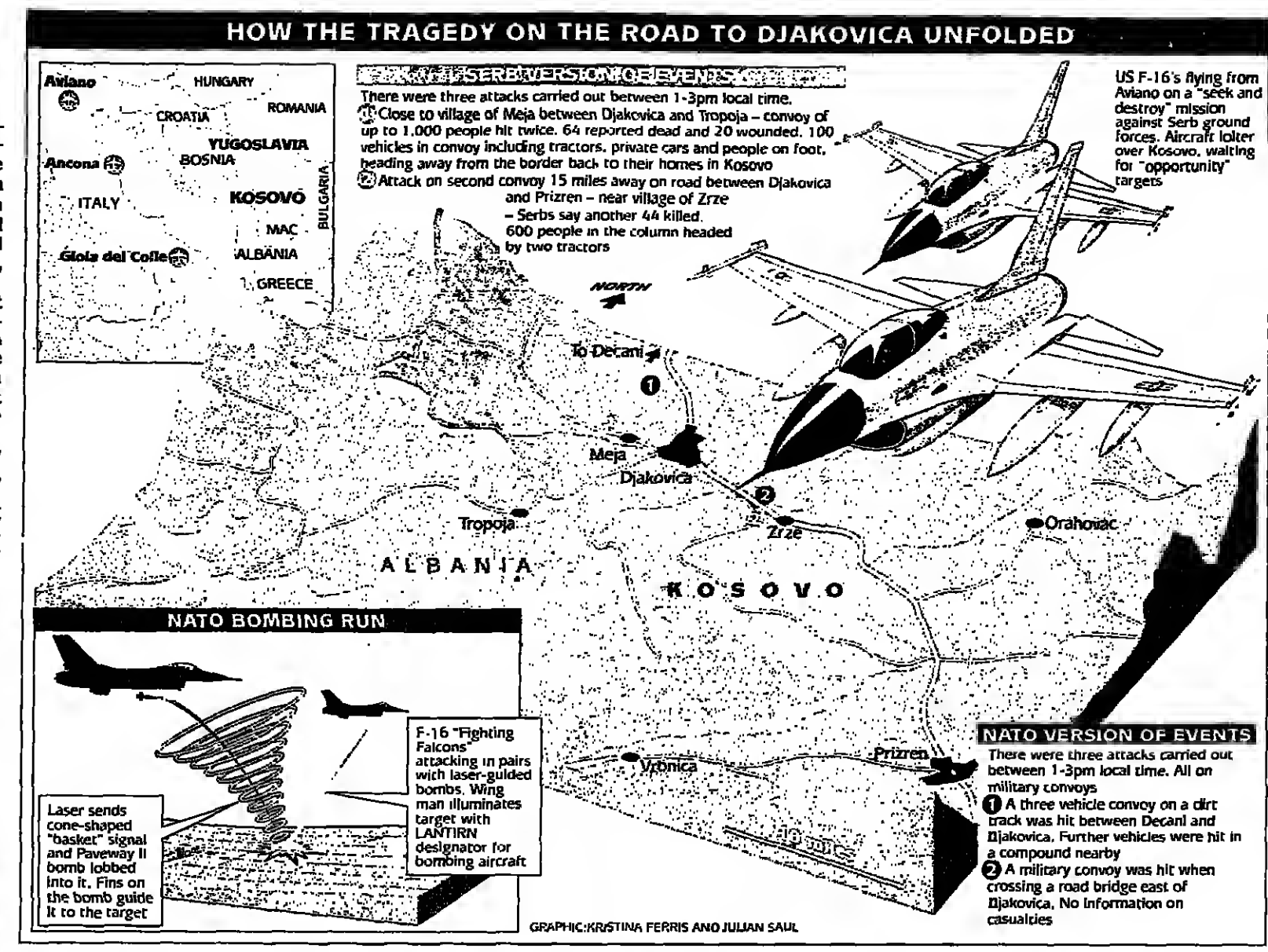
Satisfied that he had identified the same forces who had been setting fire to the villages, the pilot decided to mount an attack.

"I go in, put my system on the lead vehicle and execute a laser-guided bomb attack on that vehicle destroying the lead vehicle," he said.

Realising he was running low on fuel, the pilot and his wingman - the second pilot in the flight, who was marking the target with a laser for the bomber - pulled away.

He passed on the map coordinates of the target to the next "flight", or squad, of aircraft. In turn, this next flight spotted a further three vehicles in a compound beside the dirt road. Using the same laser-guided weapons, this team then moved in to destroy these targets, dropping three bombs.

Later in the afternoon another team of F-16 bombers attacked a separate military convoy. These were spotted on a road bridge east of Djakovica.



GRAPHIC: KRISTINA FERRIS AND JULIAN SAUL

claim the first convoy to be hit was a procession of 1,000 people and 100 vehicles - tractors and private cars - struck by three bombs as it passed the village of Maja, close to Djakovica. They say 64 people were killed and 20 wounded.

Soon afterwards, they say, Nato aircraft struck a second convoy, this one a line of 600 people travelling on the same road but in the village of Zrze, 15 miles to the east. While this may have been the second of Nato's targets, Belgrade insists there were no military vehicles, just refugees' tractors and trailers. They said 44 people were killed at Zrze and dozens injured.

"[This was] a horrendous massacre" claimed the Serbian President, Milan Milutinovic. "This cannot be explained as an error when the columns of refugees were bombed four times - this was done deliberately."

"It was a massacre of Albanian refugees who were returning to their homes in the middle of the day."

What can we know for sure?

We know that innocent refugees were killed on Wednesday by bombs dropped from Nato planes.

We know that they were desperate, exhausted people who had probably been on the move for weeks, their only possessions the little they could carry as they fled from their homes.

We can presume that they were not deliberately targeted by Nato - the political fallout from this "accident" will be bad enough.

We must question Pentagon and Nato suggestions that Yugoslav MIG fighters attacked the columns. Experts point out that Nato would have spotted and shot down any Serb planes.

In any case, the refugees themselves would not have been able to identify whether the planes were Serb or Nato.

They simply talk of being attacked from the air, of the ground exploding in front and around and behind them, and of shattered bodies and twisted machinery.

They talk of a horror that has become ingrained on their memories.

PROPAGANDA WARS

Wednesday 14 April
15.53: Belgrade claims Nato missiles hit a 100-vehicle refugee convoy.

15.56: Officials in Pristina say there were two attacks. They report 64 people killed and 20 wounded at Maja and six killed at Zrze.

16.30: Nato plays down Serb claims. "We have no information about this," says a spokesman.

17.59: Jeff Rowland of the World Food Programme says refugees entering Albania report three aircraft dropped three bombs killing "many" people.

19.06: Nato confirms its aircraft had attacked Yugoslav military vehicles on a road where the convoy was attacked.

19.44: Nato spokesman Jamie Shea says: "Nobody should jump to any conclusions. Nato doesn't attack civilian targets."

20.05: Tony Blair says: "We cannot take at face value any claim made by Serb authorities. Anything they do they use for propaganda purposes."

20.53: Pentagon admits Nato may have struck the convoy.

Thursday 15 April
11.00: Foreign Secretary, Robin Cook, says: "We understand that yesterday, on a country road, a number of people lost their lives which may have been during allied air attacks."

12.30: Nato admits that one of its planes mistakenly bombed a refugee convoy.

14.00: Nato gives full details of what it calls a "tragic accident". Jamie Shea says: "Sometimes one has to risk the lives of the few to save the lives of the many."

'I roll in, put my system on the vehicle and execute...'



An F-16 Hornet pilot saluting before taking off from the carrier USS Theodore Roosevelt in the Adriatic

THIS ACCOUNT of the attack on the convoy was given by the unnamed American fighter pilot of the first aircraft in a debriefing session. A recording of the debriefing was played yesterday at a Nato briefing session in Brussels.

THE PILOT started by saying that as he flew at 15,000ft over South-west Kosovo he saw what he took to be systematic burning of villages by Serb forces.

"I work my way back up to the road, and I see another house that had just been set ablaze and a three-vehicle convoy moving South-east about a click (kilometre) from the freshest burning house. They come to a stop at the next house down the road."

"I am convinced now the VJ (Yugoslav Army) and MUP (Ministry of Interior police)

forces, working their way down towards Djakovica and the refugees, are preparing to set this next house on fire.

"I made several passes to ensure that they are in fact military vehicles. I roll in on two passes to get a close look both with my eyeballs and my targeting pod."

"I make a decision at that point that these are the people responsible for burning down the villages that I have seen so far. I roll in, put my system on the lead vehicle and execute a laser-guided bomb attack on that vehicle destroying the lead vehicle."

The pilot then said that his aircraft was low on fuel and had to pull out of the area. He then described how he then passed on the target co-ordinates and a general description of the vehicles to another pilot who then also attacked.

Strike aircraft hunt in deadly pairs controlled from on high

THE MISSION

BY JOHN DAVISON

THE TWO F-16 Fighting Falcons would have taken off from Aviano air base in northern Italy as part of a typical bombing formation of eight aircraft that work in pairs or "two ship flights". But they are just the strike element of a complicated attacking "package" that has to co-ordinate all the way to the target and back.

First, they would meet up with an airborne tanker to refuel before the mission was brought together under control of an E-3 Hawkeye aircraft, flying at about 30,000 feet. It carries out the role of an airborne air traffic controller, guiding the various elements together.

Other aircraft would include those jamming Serb radar and carrying Harm missiles to destroy radar defences. There would also have been fighter aircraft to protect the rest from enemy fighters. "The whole

mission involves punching a hole into the enemy's air defences, completing your work and then punching your way out again," said an RAF source yesterday.

The "work" in this case involved a seek-and-destroy mission against Serb tanks, other armour and vehicles on the ground. Such sorties flown by Nato planes have often been frustrated by bad weather that has kept Serb forces hidden.

The difference between this and other missions is that the exact target will probably not be known before the aircraft take off, and no prior approval will be needed. They are looking for what are called "opportunistic targets", and fly in holding patterns above the area until one presents itself.

This information might come from intelligence on the ground, from unmanned drones flying over the area or from American Jstars aircraft, which use radar to spot movements from up to 150 miles away. All this would be fed to the pilots through the Awacs, which would also be sending a picture of the whole mission to air commanders, either in Italy or flying over the area in a specially converted Hercules mobile command and control centre.

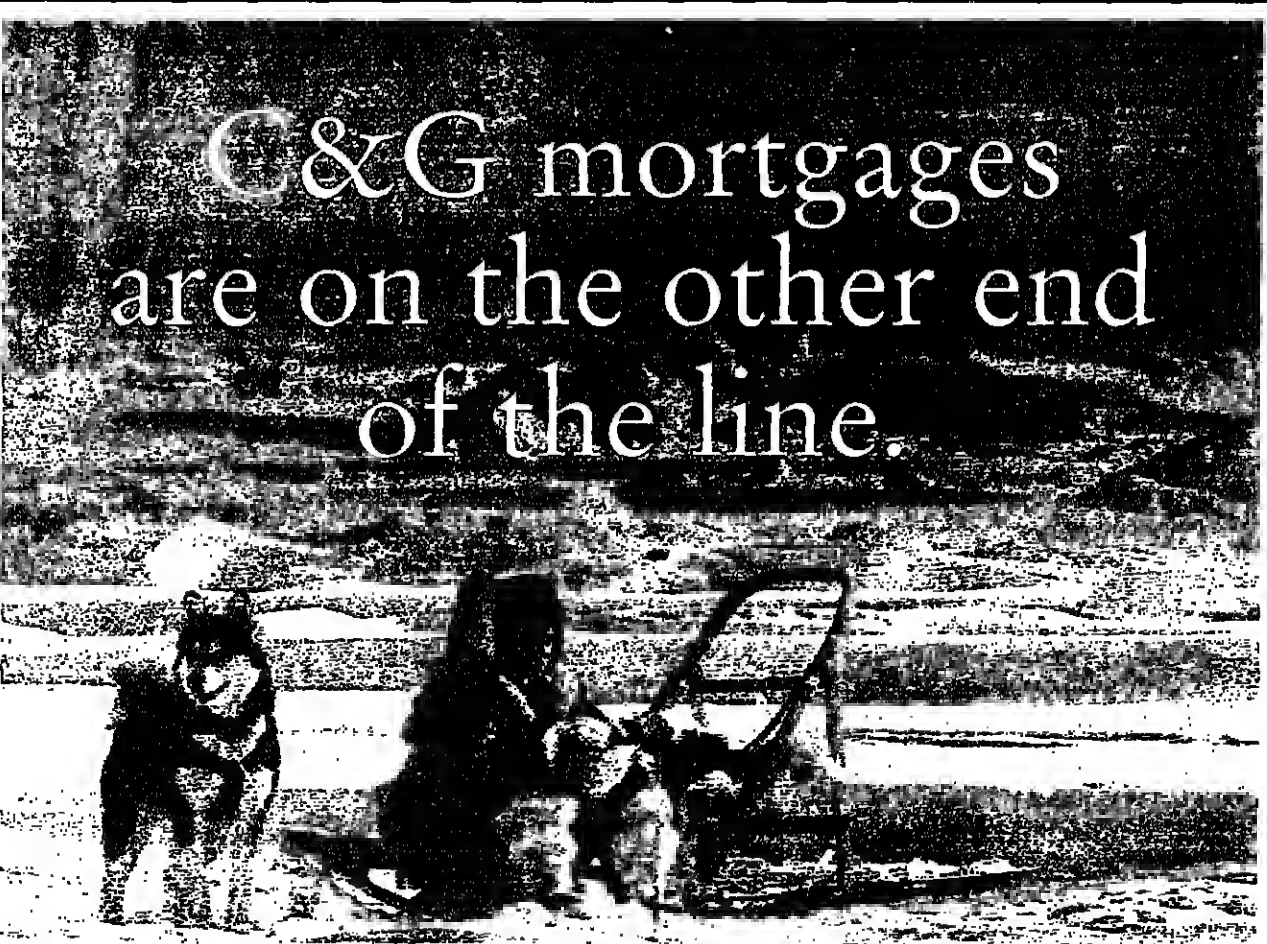
Alternatively, the pilot might just see something on the ground and launch an attack. In that case, no target approval would be necessary. This kind of attack, then, is a long way from the process of checking and approving target lists that

has been much discussed over the past weeks. It relies entirely on a pilot being able to identify a military target correctly.

"At the end of the day there has to be an element of discretion, because mobile targets move," said one source.

Because of continuing fear about Yugoslav air defences, particularly from hand held surface-to-air missiles, the bombing is almost all taking place from medium altitude of about 15,000ft. From that height, three vehicles in a convoy would only appear as dots on the ground.

Rules of engagement include the strict requirement for pilots to abort a mission if they are not certain they can avoid civilian casualties, and such cancelled attacks have been reported in respect of RAF Harriers. But perhaps it was just a matter of time before this kind of pilot error led to a disaster.



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Macedonia is 'collapsing under strain'

REFUGEE CAMPS

By RICHARD LLOYD PARRY in Skopje

THE MACEDONIAN government angrily denounced Western nations yesterday for breaking their promises to give sanctuary to Kosovo refugees, and warned that the country's fragile economy was heading for collapse under the burden of the Balkans crisis.

"We can accept refugees at the borders and transport them to other countries or to the airport," the Macedonian interior minister, Pavle Trajnov, said in an interview with *The Independent*. "Why the foreign countries don't accept that, I do not know. They declare that they want to help the refugees, but it is enough just to come to the camps, take photos with the refugees, and then tell the whole world. See, we've done so much for the refugees!"

He spoke as the British Foreign Office minister, Tony Lloyd, was flying into the Macedonian capital, Skopje, for a half-day tour after spending a few hours in neighbour-

ing Albania. Mr Lloyd met the Macedonian Prime Minister, Ljubco Georgievski, and toured the Braza refugee camp, which has been built and operated by the British army.

Earlier this month, Britain announced that it was prepared to provide sanctuary for "some thousands" of refugees. Other countries, including the US, made similar announcements, but so far few have lived up to their commitments.

"We have always made it clear that where there was a demand, the UK would take in refugees," Mr Lloyd said, after posing for the cameras with refugee children in front of their tents. "But we are not interested in creating a permanent refugee camp outside the region. We are determined that these people will go back to their homes, but if the UNHCR (UN High Commissioner for Refugees) said, 'Please reconsider', then we will reconsider."

According to the UNHCR, 1,000 or so refugees are being evacuated every day to half-a-dozen countries, including Germany, Turkey, Poland, Switzerland, Norway, and even Israel and Iceland. But there was confusion over whether Britain had been asked formally to receive refugees. "If Britain says we haven't made a formal request then I suppose we haven't," a UNHCR spokesman said yesterday.

Macedonia has been bitterly criticised for the desperate situation earlier this month, when tens of thousands of refugees were trapped for three days in a morass of mud at the border crossing of Blace, and roughly treated by border police. But Mr Trajnov accused foreign governments of hypocrisy in their approach to the crisis. "We've seen it before in other places, and it's happening again here," he said. "They pass judgement on how the refugees are being cared for and say the camps

are not well equipped and not well organised. At the same time, they come up with 300 excuses why they themselves shouldn't (take any refugees)."

Since last spring, when fighting began in earnest between the Yugoslav security forces and the Kosovo Liberation Army, some 150,000 Kosovo Albanians have fled to

Macedonia - an 8 per cent population increase in a country with an already delicate ethnic and political balance between Slavs and Albanians.

As Mr Lloyd pointed out: "It's equivalent to the UK absorbing 5 million refugees. If we were faced with 5 million people queuing at the Channel Tunnel, we'd also have cause

for concern." The difference in Macedonia is that ethnic Albanians already made up a quarter of the population.

The vast refugee influx of the past three weeks has raised fears of ethnic conflict with members of the Macedonian majority.

In 1994, there were riots in Macedonia after the govern-

ment tried to stop ethnic Albanians opening their own university in the western town of Tetovo. Mr Trajnov said he was concerned about the presence among the refugees of members of the KLA, and the potential conflict which this could create with the government in Belgrade.

He said that as a result of

the crisis, foreign companies had suspended investment negotiations and banks were reluctant to give credit to Macedonian borrowers.

"I think in six months there will be a total collapse of the economy," he said. "Then there would be a lot of side-effects for national security, law and order and society."



British Foreign minister Tony Lloyd touring Braza refugee camp: 'We're determined these people will go back to their homes' Tom Pileton

15 mass gravesites found in Kosovo

WAR CRIMES

By STEVE BOGGAN in Tirana

WAR CRIMES investigators in the Hague have been given evidence of at least 15 mass graves inside Kosovo.

Witnesses have told of large groups of ethnic Albanians being slaughtered and buried all over the province. Prosecutors from the tribunal, set up in the aftermath of the 1992-5 Bosnia war, plan to exhume bodies after Serb forces are out of the region. "It's terrifying," Graham Blewitt, the deputy prosecutor of the International War Crimes Tribunal told *The Independent* yesterday. "We also heard stories of massacre and rape on a large scale."

Mr Blewitt refusing to divulge the locations, logging the information so far as "unconfirmed". But the number and similarity of accounts is chilling. The medical aid organisation Medecins sans Frontiers says it has more than 50 testimonies relating to the existence of the graves from refugees who have crossed into northern Albania.

"We have assigned one of our aid workers full-time to take statements from witnesses who are talking time and time again of mass graves," said Christopher Stokes, MSF's emergency co-ordinator in Tirana.

"We have interviewed only a fraction of the people who want to talk to us because we always insist on a counsellor being present. The trauma involved in retelling their stories can be considerable."

Governments, aid agencies and prosecutors have learned much from mistakes made in Bosnia, when vital witnesses to events were lost in the confusion of the conflict. This time, the collection of evidence is running in tandem with the provision of aid.

"We are much better prepared this time," said Mr Blewitt. "When we started in Bosnia, we were the new kid on the block and we have to carve out a niche for ourselves. Now, we have established relationships and lines of communication to ensure we get the information we need to bring the perpetrators of war crimes to justice."

The help of agencies and governments is vital to the UN-funded tribunal. It has only 70 investigators, although its budget, at \$100m is not inconsiderable.

Earlier this week two of its staff, Frank Dutton, investigations commander, and Tim Kelly, arrived in the Albanian capital Tirana to begin gathering evidence of atrocities. Both men are former detectives, Mr Dutton with the South African police, Mr Kelly

with the police department of New South Wales in Australia.

Almost immediately, they were given more than 300 witness statements and 30 hours of video-taped evidence by the office of Albert Rakiqi, Albania's chief prosecutor, detailing acts of rape, murder and violence.

On Wednesday, 29 regional prosecutors met in Tirana to discuss the collection of evidence from the 314,000 refugees dotted in camps, municipal buildings, warehouses and family homes all over the country.

"I have 80 people working full time on this," Mr Rakiqi said. "So far we have interviewed people who claim evidence of massacres at Raak, Goden, Rahovic, Gjakov and Kamenice. We believe there are other places."

"There is also evidence relating to rape. We have statements from 13 women who say they were raped by Serbs. We want to gather as much evidence as soon as possible while we can still keep in

contact with the victims and witnesses."

Yesterday, *The Independent* gave the Hague investigators details of Dr Silvia Miria, director of the Tirana Counselling Centre for Women and Girls, whose work gathering evidence on the rape of Kosovar women was featured on Tuesday.

They plan to meet her again. But Mr Dutton, a former Nazi war crimes investigator in Australia, said the work of investigators would be pointless without the willingness of the international community to bring suspects to trial.

He said there was disappointment at the Hague that some of those indicted over the Bosnian atrocities - including the Bosnian Serb leader Radovan Karadzic and the military commander Ratko Mladic - are still free.

"Perhaps if they had been tried and convicted it might have proved a deterrent to others," he said. "And we would not be in this position now."

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سكرا من الامم



Bombs, missiles and aircraft crowd the flight deck of the carrier USS Theodore Roosevelt, which is operating in the Adriatic

Reuters

Army of 200,000 needed for all-out ground war

ALLIED STRATEGY

BY MARK DEJEVSKY in Washington

AMERICAN DEFENCE chiefs yesterday gave their most comprehensive account of the Balkans war and of the allied strategy for victory over the forces of Slobodan Milosevic.

Defending the campaign on Capitol Hill, William Cohen, Defence Secretary, appeared with Hugh Shelton, Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, before the Senate Armed Services Committee.

Mr Cohen said even the air operation was "very risky". The reason there had been no planning for "ground troops" was because "in truth, there was no consensus [in Nato] to do anything but this".

He noted that there had been no consensus in Congress either, even for the 4,000 men the US was planning to contribute to a Nato peace-keeping contingent of seven times that number.

Mr Cohen gave a warning that from now on Nato and US casualties were probable rather than possible.

Any debate on ground troops in Nato, he said, "could have been endless" and resulted in no one taking any action "while exterminations were taking place in Kosovo on an instalment basis".

He said Nato had conducted two "assessments" of its strategy in Kosovo. The first considered a "non-permissive environment", taking control by force of "just Kosovo" or Belgrade and much of Serbia as well. The first, he said, would require a force of 75,000; the second 200,000.

The other scenario presupposed a "permissive environment" and estimated a force of 28,000-30,000 troops for peace-keeping.

General Shelton warned that if ground troops were to be sent, the time from dispatch to deployment would be "long drawn out", and that nothing could be decided without the "support of Congress and the American people", otherwise it would "fracture the alliance".

The current position, he said, was that "the North Atlantic Council has said specifically not to commence planning [for ground troops]".

In his breakdown of the operation so far, General Shelton said the US had deployed 463 planes in the region, 247 of

them fighters and bombers, 17 reconnaissance and the remainder support aircraft. Other Nato countries had contributed 217 planes, the majority fighters. US naval forces included an aircraft-carrier, two submarines and several minesweepers in the Adriatic.

It would not be easy, he told senators, to complete the operation, with air power alone. "It will take a long time, but the military objective as outlined can be accomplished".

There had been a three-phase plan: 1. to create the conditions to facilitate the operation; 2. to "isolate Serbian forces" and 3. "to dominate or decimate those forces". At each stage the hope was that Mr Milosevic would choose a political settlement.

The first stage entailed the use of mainly long-range missiles and precision bombing to neutralise Yugoslavia's Russian, British and US-supplied air defences. In the second stage the range of ground targets had been increased to

include the headquarters of the army and police. Yugoslavia's integrated command and control system, its military supply system, and the road and rail network. The third stage would concentrate on forces in the field. "That is about where we are now".

Cataloguing the damage, General Shelton said 50 per cent of Yugoslavia's frontline fighters had been destroyed with the bulk of surface-to-air missile storage sites, military headquarters buildings and barracks belonging to the police and army. A "considerable amount" of the country's fuel supplies had been destroyed and three-quarters of munitions production had been "damaged or destroyed" in all areas of Serbia.

Mr Cohen said it was wrong to believe the Kosovo Liberation Army had been destroyed; it had lost maybe "several hundred" men, but was fast being replenished as Kosovars were "radicalised" by the Yugoslav assault. One objective, General Shelton noted, was to "degrade" the Yugoslav

forces to where "the balance of power shifts between uniformed members of the Serb forces and the KLA".

On the risk that Russia could become involved, Mr Cohen reassured senators that the US had no evidence that Russia was sending war supplies to Yugoslavia. But he disclosed that Washington had warned Moscow of "serious consequences" if the intelligence-gathering ship it was sending to the Adriatic was used to convey information to the Serbs.

ANALYSIS

Nato caught between conflicting strategies



ANNE MCELVOY

NATO'S PRESENT dilemma is rendered brutally clear in the pictures of dismembered bodies from Wednesday's bombed convoys. The casualties are a direct consequence of the decision to widen the scope and intensity of the air attacks. Yet without this extension of the bombing targets, the Alliance was making no real impact on the Serbian military infrastructure, nor on its brutality over Kosovo.

The damage inflicted from the air to the enemy's operational capability is a necessary prerequisite to any final conflict. But it takes a lot of air power to dent a really powerful military machine. The more intense the bombing becomes, the more inevitable the risk of unintended fatalities. Harsh but true.

After three weeks of engagement, Nato is stuck in the middle of two strategies without clarity about what the end game will look like, or how it intends to get there. There has never been a war when the generals were so hidebound by their government masters. Political reluctance to address the question of how and when ground troops will be committed means that Nato's only explanation for what it is doing - and for what went wrong this week - is incomplete.

Officially, the strategy is simply, in Robin Cook's words, "to continue until the job is finished". But it was always improbable that bombing alone would finish the job. Early optimism that any show of force would stay Milosevic's bloody hand in Kosovo proved wrong. So the raids were stepped up, targets increased in order to cause maximum damage. This makes sense as a preparation for sending in ground troops.

It is harder to justify if this goal has not been made clear - and indeed, is still officially denied - and when we are still reduced to having to guess the ultimate intentions of the Alliance by reading between the lines of politicians' speeches. Air power, for all the advances in technology, cannot tell Serb-commanded trucks or tractors from those

occupied by Kosovan refugees. As the pressure intensifies on the Serbian forces and their petrol supplies run out, they will commandeer more civilian vehicles. From the Serb point of view, there is every reason to expose fleeing refugees to Nato attack.

As both George Robertson and Robin Cook showed when they spoke with palpable strain of Wednesday's incident, just two days after civilian deaths on the bombed train, the simple mantra that the air attacks must continue because that is what we started, sounds less convincing when Nato has killed the very civilians it went to war to save. We are uncomfortably reminded of the Catch-22 logic of the American spokesman in Vietnam who announced: "We could only save the village by destroying it." Public faith in Nato could decline sharply if its actions are seen to produce diminishing returns or to lack the clarity of a crusade. The Alliance never looked so vulnerable as in its first ill-considered attempt to spin the early news of the disaster. The public in America and Europe knows that Serbia's heavy-handed propaganda is mendacious: it requires a higher standard of honesty from the Alliance.

At the Brussels summit, Europe showed a united front, not least because EU countries learned from the humiliation of Bosnia that they have nothing to gain by parting company from the Americans at a time of crisis in Europe. But there are differences of nuance which need to be addressed soon. Far from being, as his critics carped, Bill Clinton's poodle,

Tony Blair has the far greater crusader's instinct and desire to move the conflict along to a conclusion. Officially, of course, there is no distinction between the British and US positions. But the view that ground troops are a necessity is acknowledged today more readily in London than Washington. The longer a decision is postponed, the more potential there is for Nato countries to develop their own ideas of how the conflict should end. Bill Clinton was less than enthusiastic about the German plan to halt air strikes if Serb forces began withdrawing from Kosovo. Nervousness in Europe about the winability of the war is the greatest risk to Alliance unity.

In all likelihood, ground troops will be the last chapter - or rather the beginning of a whole new book. The remaining question is how they will get there, and under what circumstances. The first option is an all-out offensive, which has hitherto been deemed too risky. The second is if southern Kosovo is abandoned by the Serbs, so that Nato can move in without an offensive against Milosevic. Hence Mr Cook's prediction that there "may be circumstances in which one could envisage an international protection force going in without a formal treaty arrangement, but with no resistance on the ground". The third option is to allow the Russians a greater role. Moscow and Nato would move into Kosovo together; the Russians guaranteeing Serb security in return for partition - the option Mr Blair appeared to dismiss.

It falls to America to decide how this will end. Up to now, President Clinton's dominant consideration has been not to risk US casualties. But there is another imperative for a White House incumbent anxious to salvage the reputation of his presidency and bequeath the Democrats victory: namely to ensure he is not seen to have led America into humiliation. Unless Nato sets out what it means by victory and how it intends to achieve it, it may well be seen to have lost the war that does not speak its name.

THE BALKAN QUESTION

KEY ISSUES BEHIND THE WAR EXPLAINED

Nato's bomb hit a farm "compound". But why were the refugees in a walled compound to start with?

Kosovar Albanians have always lived on farms with high walls and wooden gates, sealed off from the world.

When you travelled across Kosovo you could often tell the nationality of the owner by whether the house was open or shut off. One reason for

these huge medieval-looking stockades is that rural Albanians live in extended families, so they need a lot of space. Another is Muslim conservatism; rural Kosovars do not like their wives and daughters to be seen by outsiders.

For Kosovo Albanians, the outside world in the form of the Serbian authorities has always been a hostile force, so the Kosovars feel safer behind their high walls.

Have Albanians always lived in Kosovo?

Serbs and Albanians argue over which community first settled Kosovo, but there is no doubt that it was mainly Serb in the Middle Ages, when their princes built many monasteries there. The Albanians became the majority under the five-century rule of the Ottomans, which lasted until 1912 when Serbia retook the province in the first Balkan

war. From then until the 1930s the Serbs tried to resettle the province, but the experiment collapsed in the Second World War and Tito forbade the pre-war colonists to return.

Although some Albanians settled in Kosovo after the war, the real reason for the steep rise in the Albanian population was their birthrate, which is the highest in Europe.

MARCUS TANNER

Readers donate over £500,000

DONATIONS FROM Independent readers are still pouring in for the Kosovo refugees: more than £500,000 has been raised since the appeal was launched a fortnight ago.

A spokesman for the Disasters Emergency Committee, which is co-ordinating the appeal, said: "We have been overwhelmed by the response... The money will be used... for food, blankets, first aid and emergency shelters. It will also help to pay for sanitation and water-purification equipment - vital requirements if the refugee camps are to avoid falling foul of disease."

More than 500,000 Kosovar Albanians have fled or been forced from their homes by

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Serb "ethnic cleansing" of the province. Many are in camps in Macedonia, others have fled to Albania and thousands of others have been flown to countries in the West.

TIMETABLE: DAY 23

Thursday 15th April

12.00-3.00am: Shelling around the border point of Morina, the main route out of Kosovo for 300,000 refugees in recent weeks.

12.30am: Five explosions heard in central Belgrade.

1.35am: Nato missiles reported to have landed in Samaila, west of Kraljevo.

3.30am: Tanjug reports seven explosions in and around Nis and says a bridge in Jasika was destroyed.

9.00-11.15am: Machine gun and artillery fire continues along the Yugoslav and Albanian border.

10.00am: Tanjug reports three blasts in Pristina.

1.00pm: Nato says a bomb from a plane appeared to have mistakenly hit a refugee convoy.

2.15pm: Nato "deeply regretted" causing civilian deaths in the convoy attack but stressed that strikes against Yugoslav military targets would continue.

3.00pm: The US signals that the Nato air campaign could stretch into summer.

5.45pm: OSCE announces five members of KLA were killed and eight wounded in fighting along the border of Yugoslavia and Albania, earlier in the day.

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An archaeologist getting a close-up of the skeleton of the woman who is believed to have lived in the fourth century AD. Glynn Griffiths

Roman aristocrat's body found in mud

ARCHAEOLOGISTS WERE yesterday examining the skeleton of a wealthy young Roman girl, whose ornate coffin was opened after 1,600 years buried in the mud under London.

The lead coffin was found within a stone sarcophagus which was unearthed during the excavation of an old Roman cemetery in Spitalfields. It was opened by a team of archaeologists and revealed the almost perfectly preserved skeleton of a woman in her early 30s. She died in the first half of the fourth century AD.

She was lying in a bed of silt, which archaeologists are hoping will have preserved other objects. They are now battling against time to find anything else before the silt dries out and turns to dust. Initial discoveries include leaves in the coffin, which may have been a burial wreath, and archaeologists are examining the silt for bits of hair, pollen or insects which would indicate the time of year she was buried. Over the

next few weeks scientists will examine the coffin in minute detail for any clues about the woman's identity and way of life.

Taryn Nixon, the chief archaeologist, said the woman was certainly from a wealthy family. "She was part of the rich landed ruling classes that ran the country under Roman law," she said. "They made their money from agriculture and land rents from the people that farmed on the land."

Her left arm was folded across her chest - a sign of Christianity - but the scallop shells on the coffin and the presence of grave goods indicate pagan beliefs as well.

What is certain is that the woman would have lived in a large square villa surrounding a courtyard, probably in the city of Londinium. Roman law stated that human remains had to be buried outside the town. Their houses were richly decorated with mosaics and

wall paintings and the furniture was mainly wooden or wicker. They would also have had window panes made from blown glass. The woman would have visited the public baths with her friends to socialise, but would have had her own private bath for washing. It is not known whether she was buried as a wife or a wealthy man's daughter but examination should reveal the cause of death, whether she was pregnant or died in childbirth.

Whatever secrets remain to be revealed, Ms Nixon said the discovery of the sarcophagus, which is the first to be found in Britain since 1877, would shed a ray of light onto the Roman way of life. "The way in which the living treat their dead tells us a great deal about them," she said. "It is an incredibly rare find because it has not been robbed as many other graves were." The woman's remains are on view at the Museum of London until Sunday 25 April.

MP wins appeal but still barred

UNCERTAINTY surrounds the future of former Labour MP Fiona Jones, despite her victorious appeal yesterday against a conviction for election expenses fraud.

The Government initially believed it had been spared a potentially damaging by-election when the Court of Appeal overturned the guilty verdict.

Ms Jones, who won Newark at the 1997 general election with a majority of 3,000, emerged jubilant from court after the ruling and vowed to enter the Commons as soon as possible.

But the judges refused to rule immediately whether Ms Jones could be reinstated as an MP and said decision lay with Betty Boothroyd, Speaker of the Commons. The Speaker's office said it would need detailed legal advice first, but it would be "very unwise" of Ms Jones to take her seat immediately.

Ms Jones, 42, was convicted last month at Nottingham Crown Court of knowingly making a false declaration of election expenses. She was ordered to do 100 hours community service and the seat was declared vacant by the Speaker.

But the Lord Chief Justice, Lord Bingham, sitting with Mr Justice Moses and Mr Justice Peary-Davey, yesterday said the judge misdirected the jury. The judges indicated they would also be allowing the appeal of Mrs Jones's election agent Des Whiche, 73, who had been found guilty of the same offence, and fined £750.

Ms Jones and Mr Whiche were alleged to have omitted or under-declared significant amounts of expenditure, in particular on party campaign offices, on their election expenses form. Mrs Jones's counsel, Roy Amiot QC, told the Appeal Court that the trial judge, Mr Justice Jowitt, should have told the jury that an election expense,

BY PAUL WAUGH
Political Correspondent

under the Act, was confined to the promotion of the candidate's "personal" candidacy.

Lord Bingham said that the consequences of the quashed conviction raised "potentially far-reaching questions", but his view was that he and his fellow judges should not rule without first referring to the Attorney-General John Morris and the Speaker.

Lord Bingham said that the court would get into "deep waters" if it started making orders



Fiona Jones: Immediate return "very unwise"

about the internal regulations of the Commons. In what Labour claimed was a clear steer in favour of reinstatement, he said the consequences of allowing the appeal were the same as in any other case.

Mrs Jones, the first sitting MP to be convicted of electoral fraud for 140 years, said after the hearing that she had been told by the Chief Whip that no writ would now be served for a by-election.

"I have had a very raw deal and have been very grateful for all the support from my family and my constituents. It has been a difficult ordeal," she said.

BBC releases Peter Cook tape

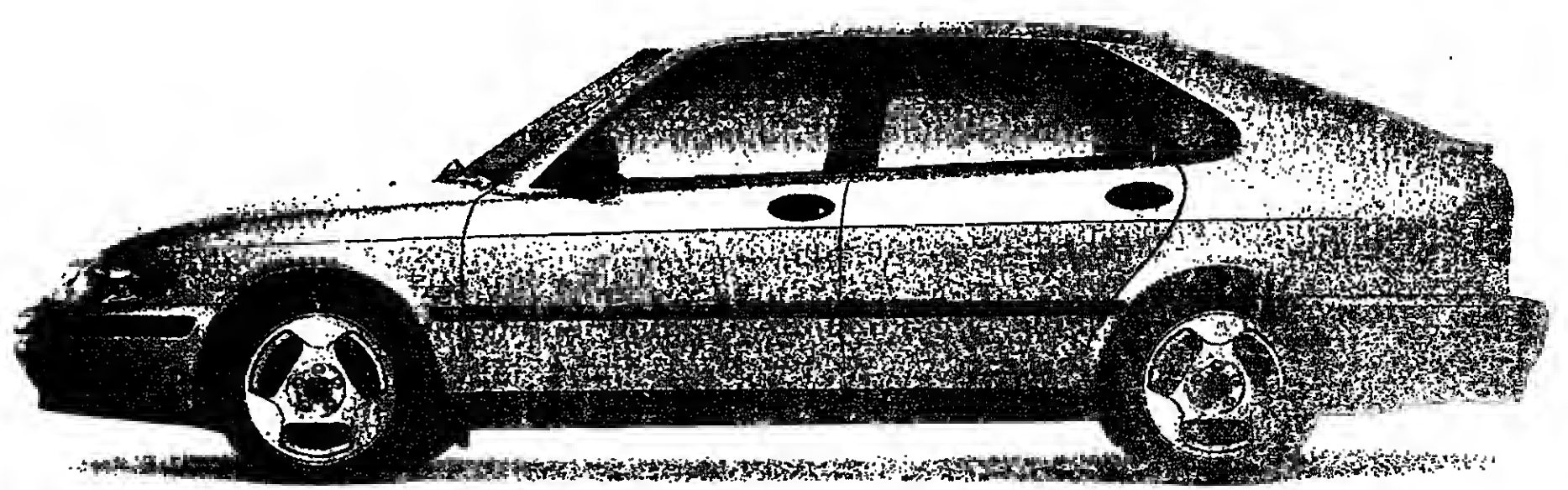
CHRIST PRACTISING resurrection by dropping dead regularly as a child and an ice dance extravaganza with Esther Williams swimming under the frozen surface are the more lucid topics covered by comedians Peter Cook and Chris Morris in Cook's last radio performance.

The conversations are released this week on tape by the BBC after being recorded in 1994 for a little-known series on Radio 3 called *Why Bother?* The two were unscripted and had satirist Morris asking absurd questions of Cook, who played his oddball creation Sir Arthur Streeb-Greebling.

BY PAUL MCCANN
Media Editor

The conversations were recorded after Cook and Morris were brought together by the comedy production company TalkBack. Their surreal interview wanders from Betty Grable's use of steroids to lengthen her legs and Cook's repeated attempts to begin an anecdote about bee-keeping.

Peter Cook, who was responsible for the satire boom in the early Sixties, died in 1995. Morris, who began his career as a prankster on local radio, gained notoriety with *Bossy Eye*, his satire on the media.



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Lesson in smugness from Mr Brown's little treasures

THE COMPETITION is pretty stiff but I think the Treasury frontbench team may be the smuggest, most self-satisfied ministerial grouping in the current Government. I should note before I proceed that there are people here with less right to hold the trophy than others. Barbara Roche, for instance, does not always pull her weight when it comes to clichés and condescension. And, paradoxically, the team captain sometimes lets the side down a bit too. This is not because Gordon Brown can't curl a lip with the best of them, but because there is still some quality of unfettered authenticity to his arrogance. As he

sneers back at the opposition or flings some dog-eared riposte there is a human flair to his performance which is missing from Alan Milburn's work on the wing. You feel that Mr Milburn works for every point he scores, an admirable dedication to the craft which should not go unrecorded. My grounds for exempting Ms Roche, incidentally, can't fairly be described as anything other than prejudice. For one thing I have noticed that I don't grind my teeth when she stands at the despatch box, for another I saw her recently on Muswell Hill High Street being nice to the children she was with. She may find

it unfair to be singled out like this but I can't dodge the facts: for her, at least, I have first-hand evidence of humanity. I realise it's possible that the supremely irritating mannerisms of her two female colleagues in the Treasury might also conceal an off-the-pitch normality. But, if so, all I can say is that they conceal it with an admirable professionalism. When I watch Dawn Primarolo at the despatch box I can't quite shake a vision of her dressed in a puce courier's uniform and surrounded by disgruntled charter passengers demanding to know when their refreshment vouchers will arrive. She clutches at her clipboard with white

THE SKETCH



THOMAS
SUTCLIFFE

knuckles, voice hovering between synthetic mollification and panic, her stresses becoming ever more stressed as the temperature rises.

Patricia Hewitt, on the other hand, adopts a different role, that of a veteran nursery school teacher – a woman who thinks of herself as having a special way with the little ones. The ghastly singsong in which she delivers New Labour's bedtime story is accompanied at all times by a fixed smile, an acknowledgement that you're going to work with toddlers. Sometimes it is necessary to be stern, of course. When one Tory MP asked an impertinent question about "dirty foreign trucks" she promptly smacked his knuckles for xenophobia. This was a tiny bit unfair, since he was talking about air pol-

lution and the trucks he had in mind were undoubtedly both foreign and dirty. But discipline must be maintained and virtue encouraged. Fortunately he was followed by a good boy, Ben Bradshaw, who earned several gold stars for coming to school on a bicycle and restored Ms Hewitt's sunny mood. It's pupils like little Ben who make the whole job worthwhile. Or like Paul Goggins, who later invoked a genuine schoolboy in a syrupy question about what representations the Chancellor had received from children with regard to debt relief. He himself had received a postcard from seven-year-old Joshua Dean

saying "Please help cancel the debt". The Chancellor briefly played Jem Uzzell, promising to sell off part of the IMF's gold mountain to fund little Joshua's dream, at which point, nervous that a moppel-gap might be opening up between the parties, Nick St Aubyn stood up to make the implausible assertion that "there are lots of children round the country who support the last Conservative government's efforts to reduce debt". We were spared the views of primary school children on the new fiscal regime for British shipping or the withholding tax, but if this sort of thing carries on Ms Hewitt's peculiar skills may come in useful.



The Tory party leader, William Hague, listening to the concerns of road hauliers in Aberdeenshire yesterday

Hague backs plan to elect 'senators'

WILLIAM HAGUE is to outflank Tony Blair over reform of the House of Lords by endorsing radical plans, published today, for a "senate" with many of its members elected by the public. A commission that was set up by the Conservative leader has proposed two options for a new second chamber, which would both involve some "senators" being directly elected for a 15-year term of office.

Today's report will increase the pressure on the Government to beef up its plans for

LOARDS REFORM

By ANDREW GRICE
Political Editor

Lords reform. Although some peers could be nominated by the Scottish, Welsh and Northern Ireland assemblies under Mr Blair's plans, he opposes the direct election of peers on the grounds that it would undermine the House of Commons. Mr Hague will finalise the Opposition's blueprint shortly after studying the findings of the constitutional commission, that was chaired by Lord Mackay of Clashfern, the former lord chancellor.

Close allies suggested that Mr Hague was ready to endorse the commission's approach by calling for a party-elected second chamber. But he may stop short of demanding a wholly elected House of Lords, which would be opposed by many Conservative MPs.

"This report strongly steers Conservatives towards solutions which listen to public concern that the second chamber should be independent and chosen fairly," Mr Hague said last night.

Lord Mackay rejected the

Government's plans to curb the existing powers of the Lords but agreed with ministers that the Commons should retain its primacy.

He said the new look second chamber should broadly retain its existing powers, but that they might need strengthening in future. Under Lord Mackay's plans, a "Senator of Parliament" (or SP) would enjoy similar pay and allowances to an MP. Although the SPs would have to stand down after serving 15 years, they could become MPs at that point, and Lord Mackay suggested that being a senator could be a stepping stone for aspiring MPs.

Under the most radical of his two options, 480 senators would be elected by 80 constituencies each with six members, who would be elected in pairs at three successive general elections. Another 15 members could be appointed by the Prime Minister during each five-year Parliament, to serve as ministers.

Under option two, a party-elected chamber would include 150 senators chosen by an appointments commission; 99 representing the Scottish,

Welsh and Northern Irish assemblies and English regions; another 99 elected in groups of 33 at each general election in proportion to the total votes cast and 100 appointed for life.

The Conservative commission proposed that the law lords should retain their seats but said that the 26 Church of England bishops who currently sit in the Upper House should lose that automatic right, although the appointments commission could consider sending them to the Lords.

Lord Mackay said yesterday that his proposals would strengthen the second chamber's advisory role, increase its legitimacy and bolster Parliament's standing – without threatening the Commons.

"We have looked to create models that bring in members with special expertise or experience and ensure that no one party is able to have an in-built majority," he said. "We have tried to ensure that its membership does not directly mimic the representation of the Commons of the day and that members are able to feel a greater level of independence from party machines."

Tory attacked over Belize shipping links

THE CONSERVATIVE treasurer was attacked in the House of Lords yesterday for his links to a "flag of convenience" shipping register with one of the worst safety records in the world.

A transport minister condemned the record of the Belize register, which is part owned by Michael Ashcroft. Mr Ashcroft has made major donations to the Conservative Party and took charge of its finances last year.

Lord Whitty, a transport minister and former Labour Party general secretary, said it seemed Tory funding had changed little. "In past life I have had cause to look at the finances of the Conservative Party and the people involved. It does appear that things haven't changed," he said. "It is true that the Belize register has a pretty poor record and there has been considerable anxiety expressed in the maritime community about that."

Lord Whitty was answering a question from Lord Razzall, the Liberal Democrat treasurer, about the sinking of a Belize-registered ship called the *Rema* last year in which five British crew members died.

SAFETY AT SEA

By FRANK ABRAMS
Westminster Correspondent

Lord Razzall said Belize had one of the worst safety records of any "flag of convenience," and asked Lord Whitty to press Mr Ashcroft to improve it. Despite being a signatory to the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea, which demands links between ships and their countries of registration, the Belize register has many ships which have little or no connection to the Central American state.

Lord Razzall said if ships were genuinely linked to the countries where they were registered, safety standards would be better and accidents such as the sinking of the *Rema* would happen less often.

Lord Brabazon of Tara, the Conservative transport spokesman, said it was wrong to draw any conclusion about the accident before an investigators' report was published. "There is a very tenuous link between Mr Michael Ashcroft and his holding in the Belize register and the fact that this ship tragically sank," he said.

THE HOUSE



Death warning

LABOUR BACKBENCHERS called for a statement on the deaths of refugees in allied bombings. Tam Dalyell, the Labour MP for Linlithgow, warned: "This will inevitably happen again and again."

Asylum on 50p

Labour backbenchers criticised the Government's Asylum and Immigration Bill because it would leave asylum seekers with as little as 50p-a-day to spend on each of their children. Present benefits will be replaced with hostel accommodation, food vouchers.

Today's agenda

Commons – 9.30am Football (Offences and Disorder) Bill, Licensing (Young Persons) Bill. Debate on cervical cancer screening procedures. Lords – not sitting

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

Pinochet cost

LORD LAMONT of Lerwick the former Conservative Chancellor, has tabled 70 questions concerning the case of General Pinochet since last December, which has cost the taxpayer £2,050, Home Office Minister Lord Williams of Mostyn, disclosed.

Allergy move

MINISTERS ARE drawing up measures to give an even greater emphasis to the National Health Service's treatment of allergy by recognising it as a speciality in its own right. Lord Hunt of Kings Heath, said.

English Nature calls for GM ban

ENGLISH NATURE yesterday reiterated its call for a five-year ban on the commercial release of genetically modified crops to allow more research on their impact on the environment.

Baroness Young, the Labour peer who chairs the organisation, told MPs that several generations of crops had to be grown before the cumulative effects on wildlife and plants could be assessed.

English Nature caused Tony Blair intense embarrassment earlier this year when it opposed the Government's refusal to impose a moratorium on GM releases.

ENVIRONMENT

By PAUL WAUGH
Political Correspondent

Baroness Young told the Commons Environmental Audit Select Committee that a ban until 2003 would allow more research on results of field trials.

She said the trials should be "rigorous" enough to take into account broader ecological and environmental implications of commercial releases.

Dr Keith Duff, English Nature's chief scientist, told the committee that management of the field trials was just as important as the growing itself.

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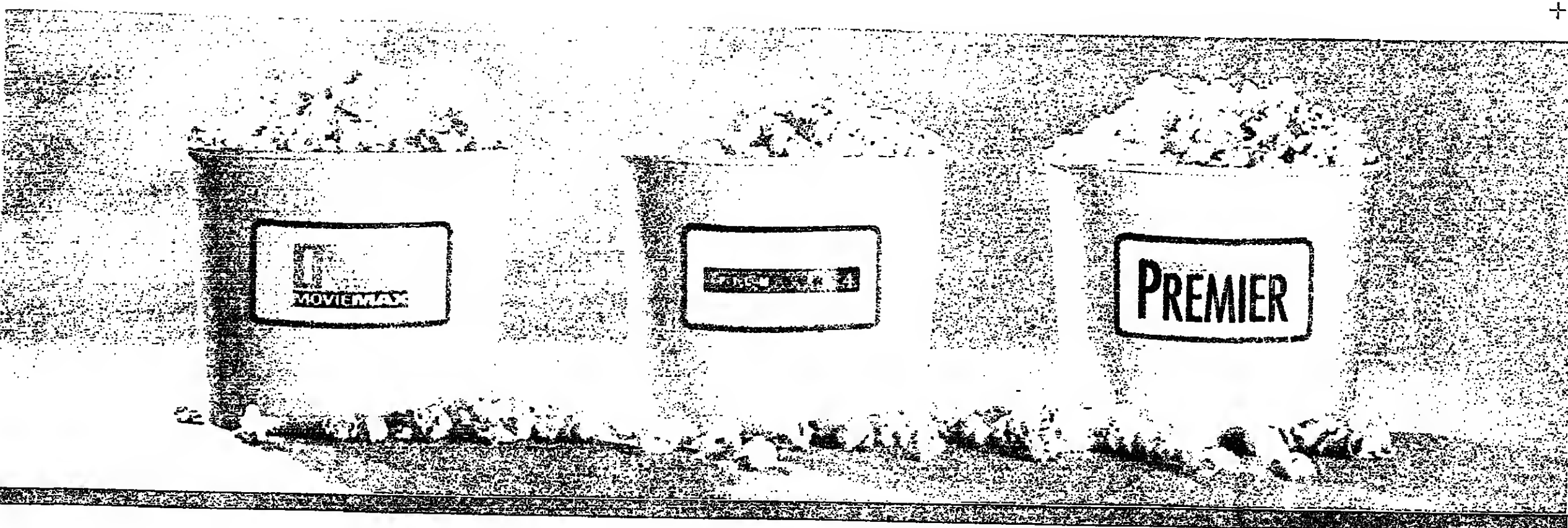
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Liverpool stops at 3.06pm, and looks back in sad anger on the day 96 died

AT SOME time in the early morning the big white clock at the Kop end of Anfield stadium had been stopped to show a time of six minutes past three.

And when that exact minute came in real time yesterday the tall, spindly figure of Ray Lewis, dressed in his referee's strip, walked out to the penalty spot and blew his whistle once - bringing an entire city to a standstill. It could have been seen as almost comical. A bare-legged, elderly man blowing a tin whistle, watched in complete silence by 10,000 people. On the contrary it was deeply moving. Because everybody in Anfield knew that exactly 10 years ago, to the second, the same man had blown the same whistle 65 miles away, at Hillsborough stadium in Sheffield, in a vain attempt to abandon a football match and save the lives of people being slowly crushed to death. His whistle came too late that day. Ninety-six people, most of them under 20 years old, were either dead or dying.

Yesterday's symbolic re-enactment was the signal for the entire population of Liverpool to stop in their tracks. And they did. Buses, taxis, lorries and cars stopped where they stood. And for sixty seconds the only sound was the tolling of the cathedral bell.

All morning, in freezing rain, thousands had walked up the hill to Anfield and the young fans in their red and white scarves made the Kop, as always, a sea of colour. Only the great roaring of the fans was absent. Long silences punctuated the prayers and the singing of a gospel choir. The words were conciliatory and respectful. Above everything else on this mournful day, we were witnessing a city honouring those who had died so obscenely, so needlessly. But underneath it all there was still, after all these years, more than a hint of a powerful rage that justice has still not been done. That there are still scores to be settled.

And after an hour of bearing the comforting words and music of "Abide With Me" and "Amazing Grace", and listening to the words of the great and good of Liverpool hoping for



JAMES DALRYMPLE

eventual release and peace for the victim's families, so we finally got to the hard, unrelenting message that is still being delivered by a community that cannot rest until somebody, somewhere pays the price of the incompetence that cost so many lives.

Trevor Hicks, who watched his two daughters, 19 year-old Sarah, and Vicki, 15, die on the Hillsborough turf, gave the keynote speech yesterday. He began quietly. A long list of thanks to dozens of people. He even made a few jokes, pointing out that the stopping of the big clock meant that he could talk as long as he liked and it would still be the same time. But in the end his anger flooded out. And there was no doubt that 10,000 ordinary Liverpudlians agreed with him.

"Some people," he said, "many in positions of authority, politely say that we should let the tenth anniversary be the end of it. Others are more forthright and come out and say they are sick of Hillsborough. The very bold say they are totally sick of us going on about it. I know I speak for many of the families when I say we agree. We are sick of it too."

"We want to get on with our lives, wrecked as they are. We look forward to some peace and quiet. The achievement of that aim could be hastened if all the obstacles were removed and all the information made available, if the ducking and diving stops - and the people responsible stand up and be counted. Nothing would please us more than an early opportunity to test our case in a court of law."

And that was crux of it. After the hundreds of days of inquiries, coroners' inquests,



"Today is about remembering. We know we cannot get them back and we try to come to terms, we try to understand. We seek answers, the truth, justice" Howard Barlow

books, films and television documentaries, Trevor Hicks and the Hillsborough families - and the entire city of Liverpool - are still unsatisfied. They want to see police officers in the dock, charged with neglect and incompetence. To that end, their move to bring a private prosecution is still grinding its way through the legal process.

His anger, brief and flaring, brought an even deeper silence over the stadium. And then, in a moment, it was gone. "But that is all for another day," he said quietly.

"Today is about remembering the 96, and how we wish things were different. We know we cannot get them back and

we try to come to terms, we try to understand. We seek answers, explanations, the truth, justice." With that he smiled suddenly. And the father who lost his girls on a spring afternoon in Sheffield asked the crowd to get on their feet and sing the song - for more than 30 years the anthem of Liverpool itself - that he says he now loves more than any other.

A mile down the road from Anfield, in a city almost deserted because everybody who could make it was in the stadium, they could hear the crowd rear out the words of "You'll Never Walk Alone". The last time I stood in Anfield was on the day follow-

ing Hillsborough. Returning yesterday and watching this city once again offering its grief and strength to the world. I thought of that terrible five year period in the late Eighties when the world seemed to produce one disaster after another.

Working for this newspaper during those years I had seen the flames that devoured the Piper Alpha rig, and the hundreds of bodies being brought ashore. I was there the night when an escalator at King's Cross tube station was turned into a blowtorch. I had followed the murderous path of a crazed gunman through the streets of Hungerford. I had seen the upturned hull of the *Herald of*

Free Enterprise outside Zeebrugge and the lines of bodybags lying in a warehouse. And I had looked down into the great black hole in Lockerbie and seen the scores of naked bodies lying scattered on a golf course and hanging from the rooftops. All of these catastrophes were caused either by the insane actions of men or a random act of fate, involving usually a measure of neglect or incompetence. And those who had perished were just going about their business, travelling home, walking the streets of their town.

But Hillsborough was different from the rest. The 96 people who had the life crushed out

of them that day were a complete and close community, a faithful army of Saturday afternoon pilgrims, who died because they loved something.

They were the lifeblood, financially and physically, of an industry that was still, in 1989, greedy, corrupt, smug and incompetent. It could even be murderous.

We had seen death on a massive scale in death-trap stadiums from Ibrox to Haysel and Bradford with hundreds crushed and hurt to death. And at Hillsborough Stadium we saw the final flowering of their contempt as they forced the supporters into cages and squeezed them to death. Yesterday was all about remembrance. It did credit to a city and its people in its simplicity and reverence. But under the surface the rage and the cries for revenge and punishment are still strong. It may be that someday those now broken and despondent men, like Chief Superintendent David Duckenfield and several of his named colleagues, may have to answer for their disastrous decisions on that day. Others may have to explain the lies and deceit that was rife among South Yorkshire police in the following years.

But they did not set out to kill anybody on that spring afternoon. It was the Glory Game itself that did that.

TOMORROW IN
THE INDEPENDENT

Mandelson talks!



Your questions answered by the former minister in his first post-resignation interview

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New Ulster crisis talks called at Number Ten

TONY BLAIR and Bertie Ahern will call Gerry Adams, David Trimble and other key party leaders to crisis talks at Downing Street in an attempt to break the deadlock over the Northern Ireland peace process.

The Prime Minister and the Taoiseach, who failed to end the impasse over arms decommissioning, agreed to hold the fresh talks after their second meeting in 24 hours last night at No 10.

There was also a hint that the governments are prepared to alter the wording of the Hillsborough Declaration when they meet party leaders on Monday. Mo Mowlam, Secre-

BY COLIN BROWN
Chief Political Correspondent

tary of State for Northern Ireland, will hold more talks with other party leaders in Belfast.

Conceding that there were "difficulties" in reaching agreement, the Prime Minister's spokesman said the declaration was a draft document, in a clear signal that it could be changed. He remained confident the obstacles could be overcome, providing the momentum was maintained in the peace process.

After an hour-long meeting with Mr Blair, Mr Ahern said: "It is clear to us that the Hillsborough Declaration has not

yet got the widespread support that we would like. As a result, it is clear to us we have not yet reached a form that will give us a consensus that the Good Friday Agreement had. We will have to continue to do that, regardless how difficult that is."

Ms Mowlam said: "There is a determination that no one wants to stop."

Mr Ahern said both governments were committed to achieving implementation of the Good Friday Agreement with the establishment of a new power-sharing executive for Northern Ireland.

Earlier, the Sinn Féin chairman, Mitchell McLaughlin, said the credibility of the Good Fri-

day Agreement had been "seriously eroded" and warned the two governments against "parking" the peace process over the summer months.

David Trimble, the First Minister of Northern Ireland, said that would not happen. However, he said it was now up to Republican leaders to confront the hardliners within their own ranks who, he said, were barring any moves towards decommissioning.

"It is time that the leaders of the republican movement stood up to the handful of paramilitaries in their ranks that are obstructing progress," he said. "It is time they faced down the opposition in their own ranks."

IN BRIEF

Anthony Newley dies of cancer

THE ACTOR, singer and playwright Anthony Newley has died after a long battle with cancer. The 67-year-old former husband of Joan Collins died on Wednesday at his home in Florida. He came to fame playing the Artful Dodger in the 1948 film version of *Oliver Twist*.

Obituary, Review page 6

People's prayer for the millennium

MORE THAN two-thirds of people planning to watch the new year celebrations at the Millennium Dome on television believe there should be a distinctly Christian component to the proceedings, according to a poll by NOP. They wanted a "Christian moment of reflection".

Boy, 13, blinded girl with airgun

A BOY of 13 was yesterday convicted of blinding a newspaper delivery girl, 15, in one eye by firing an air pistol at her. The boy was found guilty at Exeter Crown Court of causing grievous bodily harm in the attack at Paignton, Devon, in May. Sentencing was deferred.

Ambulance man drops job claim

AN AMBULANCE officer who was sacked over his handling of a case involving two paramedics accused of ignoring a call to a dying man has withdrawn an industrial tribunal claim that he should be given his job back. David Carrington and London Ambulance Service came to an agreement.

'Freelance' vicar arrested

THE REV JONATHAN BLAKE, who calls himself "Britain's first freelance vicar", was arrested for nailing his "95 theses", on the "corrupt and corrupting" church, to the door of Canterbury Cathedral. His C of E licence was withdrawn in 1993 and he works from home in Gillingham, Kent.

Hand transplant possible in UK

THE BRITISH specialist involved in the world's first successful hand transplant, performed in France last year, said yesterday he was ready to do a similar operation in the UK.

Nadey Hakim, surgical director of the transplant unit at St Mary's Hospital, west London, said the success of the operation on Clint Hallam, an Australian, carried out by an international team of surgeons in Lyons last September, had confirmed the surgery was feasible.

Mr Hallam, 48, who lost his arm in an accident with a chainsaw 15 years ago, was given the right forearm and hand of a Frenchman who had died in a motorcycle crash. At first all went well and he was pictured holding a pint of beer.

Earlier this year, after receiving £20,000 from a Sunday newspaper for his story, he travelled to North America and was out of touch with his doctors for more than a month. When he appeared on the CBS TV programme *48 Hours* in

BY JEREMY LAURANCE
Health Editor

New York his hand appeared swollen and he said it was deteriorating. A CBS producer, Joe Halderman, described it as "almost completely dead".

Today, however, the surgical team that carried out the transplant say in *The Lancet* that Mr Hallam and his new hand are doing well. Although patients who have lost hands in accidents have had them re-attached, the transplant of a hand from a donor had not previously been attempted - except once, unsuccessfully, in Ecuador in 1964 - because of fears of rejection.

Professor Jean-Michel Du-bouard, of the Edouard Herriot Hospital, Lyons, and colleagues attribute their success to the development of new immunosuppressant drugs.

Mr Hakim said: "I am putting together a protocol to do [the operation] in London. The only question is when."

Second solar system is discovered

ASTRONOMERS HAVE discovered a second solar system around a distant star, raising the prospect of one day finding an inhabited Earth-like planet.

Astronomers in America yesterday announced the strongest evidence to date that our own nine-planet solar system is not alone.

They are due to publish results of two independent studies showing that there are at least three planets orbiting the star Upsilon Andromedae.

The star is 44 light years from Earth and was already known to have one planet, discovered in 1996.

The discovery of two further planets is the culmination of 11 years of telescope surveys designed to look for a star's "wobble", caused by the gravitational pull of orbiting planets.

It is the first hard evidence that the universe could be teeming with planets and solar systems, given that the first planet was found after a survey of just 107 stars - a minute fraction of the 200 billion stars in our own galaxy, the Milky Way.

The discovery of the first solar system beyond the Sun was made independently by scientists at San Francisco State University, Harvard-Smithsonian Centre for Astrophysics in Cambridge, Massachusetts, and the High Altitude Observatory in Boulder, Colorado. The work is due to be published in *The Astrophysical Journal*.

Debra Fischer, an astronomer at San Francisco State University, said that the discovery of three planets orbiting a single star opened up possibilities for further finds.

"It implies that planets can form more easily than we ever imagined, and that our Milky

BY STEVE CONNOR
Science Editor

Way is teeming with planetary systems," said Dr Fischer.

Observations so far indicate that all three planets are giant worlds, equivalent in size to Jupiter, the biggest planet in the solar system.

The innermost planet of Upsilon Andromedae is at least three-quarters of the mass of Jupiter and orbits at a distance of less than a tenth of that between Earth and the Sun, making its "year" just 4.6 days long.

The middle planet is at least twice the size of Jupiter and takes 242 days to orbit the star; the outermost planet - a massive world - is at least four times bigger than Jupiter and takes between 3.5 and 4 years to complete its stellar orbit.

Because instruments used in the research were not sensitive enough to detect small bodies, scientists have not ruled out the possibility that the newly discovered solar system also contains Earth-sized planets.

Discovering three Jupiter-sized planets around one star has puzzled scientists, who say that the phenomenon is not easy to explain by current theories of planet formation.

"This will shake up the theory of planet formation. A question was whether the massive bodies orbiting stars really were planets, but now that we see three around the same star, it is hard to imagine anything else," said Robert Noyes, professor of astronomy at the Harvard-Smithsonian Centre.

The scientists are convinced that their observations reflect a genuine discovery because they have been made independently by two groups, said Syl-

vain Korzenik, a member of the Harvard-Smithsonian team.

Dr Fischer agreed: "Having two completely independent sets of observations gives us confidence in this detection."

After finding the initial "wobble" that led to the discovery of the first planet, the scientists found other movements of the star, which could only be explained by the presence of a second and third planet.

"We looked at the two-planet solution [but] there was still too much extra noise. We concluded that the extra wobble could only be explained by the presence of a third planet," said Dr Fischer.



The fragment of lunar meteorite Dar al Gani 262 sold at Christie's in London yesterday

Peter Macdiarmid

Chip off the moon fetches £9,200

BY KATE WATSON-SMYTH

A TINY fragment of the Moon, 1.75 centimetres long and weighing just 0.71 grams, was sold at auction for £9,200 yesterday.

It comes from the meteorite Dar al Gani 262 - one of only 18 pieces of the Moon discovered on Earth - which was found in the Sahara desert in Libya two years ago. At 513g, Dar al Gani 262 was one of the largest lunar meteorites ever discovered. It was divided into three parts for examination and yesterday one of these was sold at Christie's, in London, to a private collector.

Tom Newth, of Christie's, said: "For some reason, which we don't fully understand, most meteorites land in the Antarctic - it might be something to do with the magnetic pull - which means that we don't find them very often."

Documentation of scientists' studies of the rock was offered for sale with the fragment.

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World's largest bacteria found off Namibia

THE BIGGEST bacteria ever known have been discovered off the African coast. They consist of cells up to 0.75mm in diameter - equivalent to seven pages of a book seen edge-on. The find was made by German, Spanish and US researchers sampling sediment off Namibia. *Thiomargarita namibiensis*, which means "sulphur pearl of Namibia", is 100 times larger than the previous record for bacterial size. "When I told them, my col-

BY CHARLES ARTHUR
Technology Editor

leagues didn't believe me," said Heide Schulz, of the Max Planck Institute for Marine Microbiology, who discovered the organisms. If the largest *Thiomargarita* were a blue whale, an ordinary bacterium such as *E. coli* would be slightly smaller than a newborn mouse. The previous largest known bacterium, which lives in the gut of surgeonfish, would on this scale be as big as a lion.



'Thiomargarita', the biggest bacterium yet discovered

Some 98 per cent of the cells consist of a liquid container, or vacuole, for storing solutions that allow the bacterium to "hold its breath" for up to three months while it waits for the correct conditions to arise, according to the report in the journal *Science*. The cells live in sediment, which is rich in hydrogen sulphide, the "rotten-egg" gas. They can store both that gas and nitrates - oxides of nitrogen - from seawater. The latter are stored in the vacuole. The cell generates energy from a reaction between the sulphide and the nitrates. But because nitrate-rich seawater rarely reaches the sediment, the cells have to be able to store the chemicals as they wait for storms to stir up the sediment and provide new "food". The importance of the role of *T. namibiensis* lies in that ability to oxidise hydrogen sulphide, which is produced in enormous quantities by other bacteria. Potentially, it can poison all sorts of life: hundreds of people died in an African town on the shores of a lake when a cloud of hydrogen sulphide was released from sediment on the lake's bottom.

But because it can transform the gas into less poisonous forms, *T. namibiensis* plays an important role for aquatic and possibly even land life. "It couples the sulphur and nitrogen cycles, perhaps to a degree not previously given enough credence," said Mr Schulz.

Cycling of nitrogen from a gas to nitrates and back again, and of sulphur from sulphides to sulphates is a key to development of life on Earth. Micro-organisms play a key role by making chemical by-products available from all those processes which can then be used by all other organisms.

PHILIP HENSHER



The Lords are behaving irresponsibly because they are demob happy

IN THE FRIDAY REVIEW PAGE 4

Met poised to pay £100,000 to Lawrences

SCOTLAND YARD is preparing to make an unprecedented ex gratia payment, believed to amount to £100,000, to the parents of black student Stephen Lawrence to compensate them for its bungled investigation of his murder.

The Yard confirmed yesterday that discussions were taking place with lawyers for the Lawrence family, but refused to comment on the size of the payment.

Neville and Doreen Lawrence announced their intention to sue the police after the publication of Sir William Macpherson's damning report on the murder investigation in February.

Glen Smyth, chairman of the Metropolitan Police Federation, told BBC Radio yesterday that he thought the Lawrences might be given separate payments.

"I was aware that the Metropolitan Police were talking about a sum in the region of £50,000 but I don't know if that was for each of them or together," he said.

Ros Howells, a friend of the Lawrence family, said that £100,000 was little compared to what they had lost. "I am hoping the lawyers will be able to negotiate a more sensible sum," she said.

BY KATHY MARKS AND IAN BURRELL

She added that the family had been forced to move house and sell their home for a low price. "One could never even begin to calculate the emotional stuff," she said. "You could never compensate anyone for the loss of a son."

News of the negotiations emerged as Gary Dobson, one of the five men suspected of murdering Stephen, took part in a radio phone-in.

Stung by the cynicism that greeted the gang's media debut last week, Dobson submitted himself to live questioning for two hours on Talk Radio yesterday morning.

During a grilling far tougher than the one he was given in his television interview with Martin Bashir last week, Dobson swore "on my mother's life" that he had not killed Stephen.

He said he had had a black girlfriend for six months when he was 14.

But he refused to take a lie detector test, saying that it would not prove anything.

Numerous callers tried without success to needle Dobson into pointing the finger at the others. "My friends have gone

through the same traumatic experience as I have," he said. "We stand by each other, all five of us, 100 per cent down the middle."

Asked by David, a listener from Manchester, whether he was intimidated by David Norris and two other suspects, Jamie and Neil Acourt, he replied: "Absolutely not. They're good friends of mine. Neil and I have been on holiday together with our girlfriends."

Callers included several former friends from Dobson's schooldays in Eltham, south-east London, including a young black man, Jermaine, who accused him of being an "undercover racist".

"Gary Dobson is a follower and he will follow the crowd," he said. "I remember him boasting about how he and his friends had attacked a boy in the area and how they cut off his ear."

Jermaine told Dobson: "I know that you never killed Stephen Lawrence, but I know for a fact that you do know who killed him."

Dobson - who revealed that he planned to write a book about his experiences - said he was not working, did not claim benefit and was supported by his parents.

Stress of the job takes toll on divorce lawyers

YOUNG FEMALE divorce lawyers are most at risk from stress, says the legal profession's counselling service. Some have threatened suicide and others suffer enormous strain on their relationships.

Figures released by the service today show that cases of stress among lawyers have doubled in the last 15 months. Forty per cent of women who contacted SolCare, the helpline and healthcare advice service funded by the Law Society, worked on divorce or child custody.

Most were under 30 and said that their firms failed to provide day-to-day support. Barry Pritchard, the SolCare national coordinator, said that many had to deal with "enormous pressures" from clients as well.

One 27-year-old woman from a high street practice in the Home Counties said that "hor-

BY ROBERT VERKAIK
Legal Affairs Correspondent

rific" workloads meant her marriage to her non-lawyer husband was "on the rocks".

She told the helpline: "I work to 9pm every night and have to come in at weekends. The work is much more emotionally demanding than I had expected." Another said: "If I go to my partner (in the firm) for help, he tells me he'll deal with it later. But usually it's something urgent that can't wait."

Susannah Haan, chairwoman of the Trainee Solicitors Group, said the group's own helpline had received 214 calls from young solicitors in the last year, two-thirds of whom were women. Two had threatened suicide and some said that their supervising partner had bullied them.

Gillian Bishop, who helped set up self-help groups for stressed lawyers, said it took a particularly hard-hearted lawyer not to be affected by the troubles of distressed clients.

Rosemary Carter, chairman of the Solicitors Family Law Association, blamed the Government for the problem. She said that the last year had seen a high level of government-generated family law reform, which lawyers had to come to terms with. Last month, the Lord Chancellor backed down on plans to scrap legal aid for family law cases. "I have no doubt that contributed to lawyers' worries," she said.

What SolCare cannot explain is why so few male family lawyers contacted its helpline. Ms Carter said: "It is probably a macho thing where men don't like to admit to their emotions."



Ray Fearon, first black Othello at the Royal Shakespeare Theatre since Paul Robeson (right) Geraint Lewis, Hulton Getty



First black Othello at RSC since Robeson

BY DAVID LISTER
Arts News Editor

THE ROYAL Shakespeare Company actor Ray Fearon is to become the first black actor to play Othello on the RSC's main stage in Stratford-upon-Avon since the American actor and singer Paul Robeson in 1959.

The play has not been performed at all in Stratford's Royal Shakespeare Theatre since 1985, as the company has not been prepared to have a white actor "black-up".

The black opera singer Willard White played the part at the RSC's studio auditorium in 1989.

Fearon will play opposite Zoe Waites. The pair recently played Romeo and Juliet for the company. The production, opening next week, will be the first play directed on Stratford's main stage by the RSC principal associate director Michael Attenborough.

Titania is 'too sexy' for schools

THE ROYAL Shakespeare Company yesterday issued a warning to primary schools yesterday that its latest production of *A Midsummer Night's Dream* is "too adult" for young children.

RSC managers were forced to send out the letter after the production was criticised as "sexually explicit" by teachers who walked out during a performance, taking pupils with them.

The children, from Our Lady of the Assumption Roman Catholic primary school in

BY BEN RUSSELL
Education Correspondent

Coventry, walked out of the production at Stratford-upon-Avon after watching scenes in which Titania simulates having sex with Bottom, who wears a donkey costume during the act.

The 10- and 11-year-olds from the school travelled to see the matinee performance after studying extracts from the play as part of their daily national literacy hour. But by the interval teachers had decided the production "went a bit too far".

Their teacher, Stephen McGaw, said: "What we saw was not what we were expecting. It was sexually explicit and it seemed the director had decided to play the sex card at every opportunity. Everyone knows Shakespeare was a bit cheeky and a bit bawdy, but this went a lot far."

"I know the play and I have seen various productions, and this was nothing like I had ever seen before."

"At the interval I called the children together and asked them why they thought I

had gathered them together. "One boy said: 'Because it is not suitable for children.' I was relieved they thought that and we left quietly. We didn't make a fuss and we didn't complain."

"The RSC is a wonderful institution and, as an English specialist, I admire the wonderful work they do in preserving Shakespeare's works. I just wish they had told us it was a bit near the mark when we booked and we would have simply said 'no thank you'."

The school has now asked the company for a refund.

A spokeswoman for the RSC said the company had now written to primary schools warning them that the production was "too adult" for youngsters.

"It is a vibrant, energetic production, which older children and adults will love," she said.

"We obviously sell tickets for all our productions in advance of the opening nights, and often the only information available in advance is details of the design and casting, not the way the play is being performed."

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THE INDEPENDENT



First black Othello at RSC since Robeson

BY DAVID LUTHER
The Royal Shakespeare Company's production of Othello, starring the first black actor to play the role since Laurence Olivier, is a triumph for diversity in the theatre.

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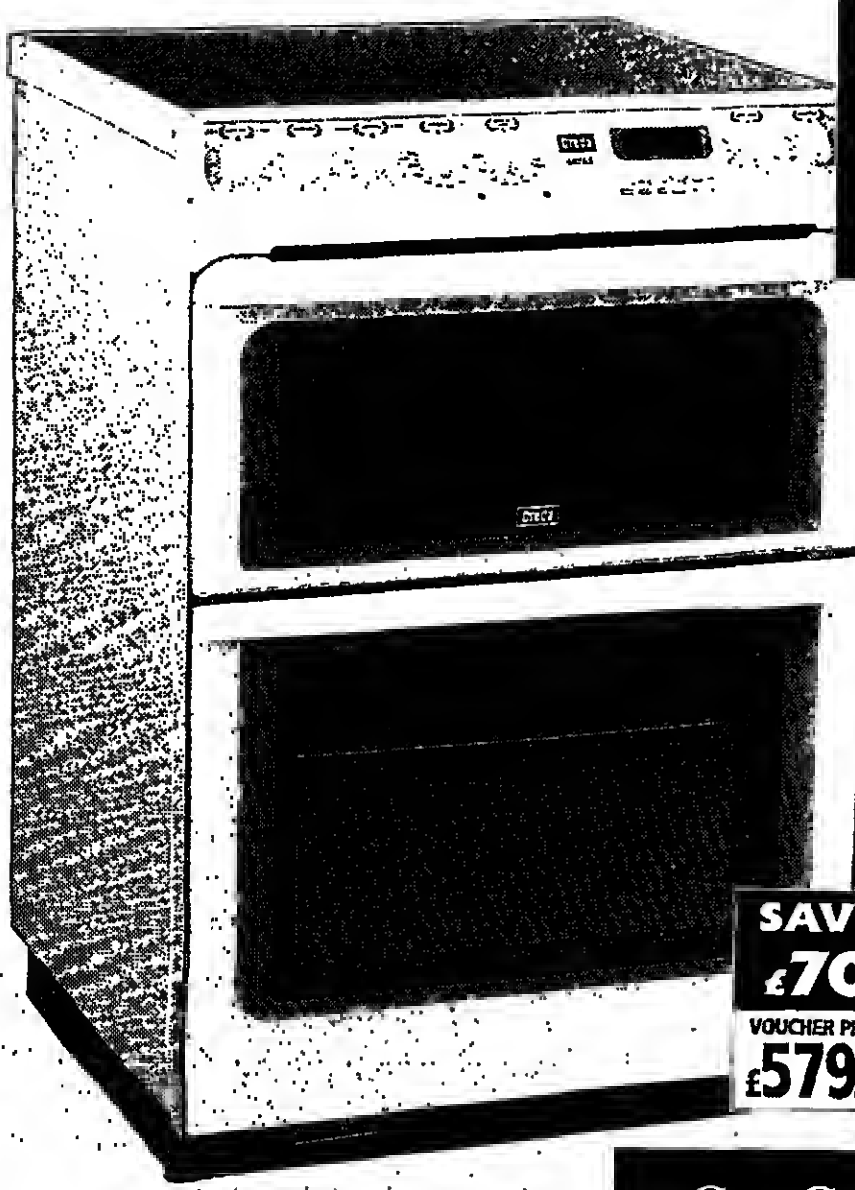
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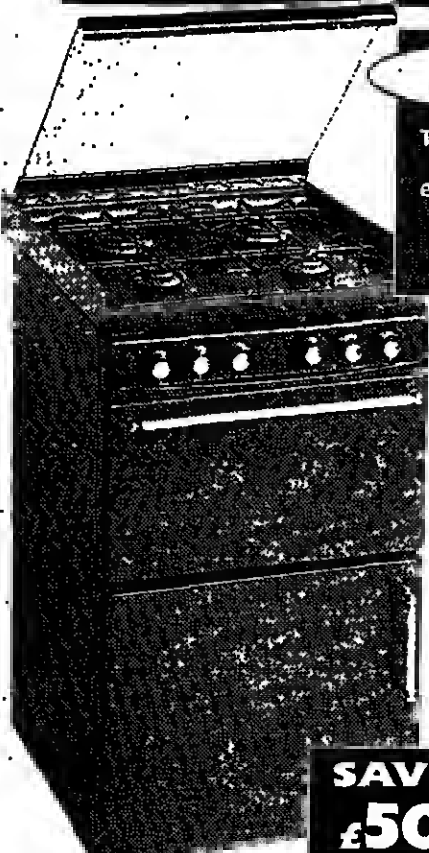
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Region in turmoil: Ex-prime minister given five-year sentence in her absence as Pakistan continues arms race with India

Bhuttos found guilty of corruption



Bhutto: Barred from office

HOURS AFTER Pakistan test-fired a medium-range missile, a court declared the former prime minister, Benazir Bhutto, and her husband guilty of corruption and sentenced them to five years in jail.

The Lahore High Court also barred them from holding any public office during this period and ordered them to pay a fine of \$8.6m (£5.3m).

"Shaheen has hit Bhutto," said one of the former premier's supporters at the Islamabad headquarters of her Pakistan People's Party, referring to the Shaheen missile Pakistan tested yesterday from a mobile launching pad at the Ormara naval base on the Ara-

BY ANWAR IQBAL
in Islamabad

bian Sea coast. It was the second missile Pakistan has fired during the last two days, in response to a similar test by India at the weekend. On Wednesday Pakistan tested Ghauri-II, an improved version of a missile it tested last year.

Bhutto supporters say the government chose the occasion on purpose. "Since people are occupied with these tit-for-tat missile tests by India and Pakistan, they will be slow to respond to the court's verdict and that's what the government wanted," said a supporter from Ms Bhutto's home province of

Sindh. Ms Bhutto was not in Pakistan to hear her sentence. Speaking from London, she said she was a victim of a political witch-hunt. In a message to her supporters from Britain, she vowed to challenge the verdict in Pakistan's Supreme Court and hoped to prove she was innocent.

Pakistan's accountability bureau, headed by Saifur Rehman, who framed the charges against her, accused Ms Bhutto and her husband, Asif Zardari, of "stealing \$100m from public funds during her two terms as prime minister", a charge Ms Bhutto denies. Mr Rehman said the Bhuttos had destroyed proof of their in-

volvement in corrupt practices. "We sent our investigators to the United States, Britain and Switzerland to collect evidence. They worked relentlessly and collected enough evidence to convict them," said Mr Rehman.

Ms Bhutto said Mr Rehman's investigators simply forged the documents to implicate her. She had earlier requested the court not to accept these documents.

Mr Rehman said: "We accepted the challenge and on our request a judicial team visited Switzerland and verified the documents as genuine. It was this judicial probe that convinced the court."

Justice Abdul Qayyum of the Lahore High Court said Ms Bhutto and her husband had been found guilty of corruption and had abused public office while in power.

The verdict automatically removed Ms Bhutto and her husband from parliament. She is a member of the lower house of parliament while Mr Zardari is a member of the upper house, known as the Senate.

He is allowed to attend the Senate proceedings although he has been in prison since Ms Bhutto was ousted as prime minister on 5 November 1996.

General elections, held three months later, brought Nawaz Sharif to power. He pledged to

"purge the nation of all corrupt politicians". He set up the accountability bureau under Mr Rehman and gave him the task to expose corrupt politicians, officials and industrialists.

But the accountability process has been seen as partisan and is accused of taking no action against government supporters.

"This is not true. We have taken action against those in the ruling party as well. Bhutto's is a high-profile case. It gets all the publicity while our other activities go unreported," said Mr Rehman.

Ms Bhutto disagreed. In a message from London to her party headquarters in Islam-

abad she said: "The sole purpose of the accountability process is to discredit me and my family."

She added: "Dealing with these allegations has traumatised me. It has been painful beyond belief."

The former prime minister said the government was doing its best to vilify her but "I am happy to say that the people of Pakistan have rejected these allegations."

Ms Bhutto said she had had no hope of proving her innocence "before a judge (Qayyum) whose father hanged my father and who is a close family associate of Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif".

Delhi vote threatens to topple coalition

THE FATE of India's 13-month Hindu nationalist government was hanging by a thread last night after the first round of a two-day parliamentary debate on its future.

The Prime Minister, Atal Bihari Vajpayee, yesterday tabled a confidence motion in his Bharatiya Janata Party-led government on the insistence of President Kocheril Raman Narayanan after the withdrawal of a key ally from the 18-member coalition.

A vote will be taken tomorrow, but the future of the government deprived of the crucial support of former film star Jayalalitha Jayaram and the 18 MPs of her All India Anna Dravida Munnetra Kazhagam party looks bleak.

However if the government is toppled - making it the fifth to go in four years - it is far from clear which party will emerge to form a new, probably equally unstable, coalition.

Sonia Gandhi's Congress party is the second largest in parliament. But it may choose to support an alliance of non-BJP parties without formally joining them in government, rather than attempting to lead its own coalition.

The contentious debate took place yesterday against the threatening back-drop of neigh-

BY IAN MACKINNON
in Delhi

bouring Pakistan's second missile test in two days. Both missile launches, of the Shaheen I and the earlier Ghauri II, showed that Islamabad is capable of striking deep into India. Pakistan had responded to Sunday's firing by India of its Agni II intermediate range ballistic missile in much the same way it trumped Delhi's decision to test five nuclear devices last May with six explosions of its own.

During yesterday's debate, the leader of the Congress party in Parliament, Sharad Pawar, criticised the BJP for launching of the Agni II, saying it was a direct contradiction to the prime minister's much-publicised efforts to reduce tensions with Pakistan.

However, analysts believe that if Congress or another coalition grouping comes to office after tomorrow's vote, none would have the power to conduct meaningful discussions with Pakistan, leaving the fractious neighbours in an uncomfortable limbo. Prem Shankar Jha, a leading political commentator, said: "If the BJP loses, everything will go on hold: talks with the US, talks with Pakistan. And going on hold means going backwards." But in the fractured



Pakistanis near Karachi celebrating the testing of the Shaheen I missile yesterday as the government in neighbouring India was preparing for a vote of confidence AP

landscape of Indian politics the big picture of national security takes a backseat, even though Ms Jayalalitha's excuse for withdrawing her support for the government was the controversial sacking of the Navy chief. Few doubt that the real motivation behind the move was that the BJP administration rebuffed her demand that it sack the Dravida Munnetra Kazhagam (DMK) state gov-

ernment of Tamil Nadu, where she and her associates face 48 corruption charges.

Consequently the DMK and its leader M Karunanidhi are among the many smaller parties, many not natural allies of the BJP that government ministers have been frantically wooing for the past week.

With 39 parties in the Lok Sabha, the lower house of parliament where yesterday's de-

bate took place, the permutations are mind-boggling and almost impossible to predict before tomorrow's vote. The Congress with a handful of loyal allies controls 145 lawmakers in the fragmented 545-member lower house, far short of the 272 seats required to form a government. Several regional parties and Communists bitterly opposed to the BJP have said they would support an alterna-

tive government, with or without Congress participation. But analysts say Congress would ideally have liked to have waited until next year before striking. Several state elections are planned then, in which it is expected to do well. "I am not sure if the Congress wants to play on this wicket. It is a fragmented house where anyone can hold you to ransom," said Ashish Nandy, a political analyst.

Despite assertions by the prime minister that his party will cross the threshold for a simple majority, he would appear to be at least 14 seats short. Yet it is impossible to rule out tactical ab-

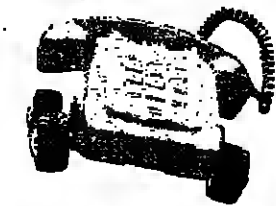
stentions by the smaller parties to keep the BJP in power, rather than foist another general election on voters already jaded by the shenanigans of the politicians.

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Russia ignores war to hang dreams on a star called Alla

BY PHIL REEVES
in Moscow

THERE SHOULD have been no argument about the item leading yesterday's midday news by NTV, one of Russia's main channels - the Balkan war, right? Wrong.

Ethnic cleansing and Nato's bombing blunders were ignored as Russia paid homage to a hero - not a general or a politician, but a gap-toothed, nicotine-voiced, and thoroughly weathered female singer.

It was Alla Pugacheva's 50th birthday yesterday, and Russia - groping to find stars on which to hang its dreams - gave her full honours. Hundreds of fans greeted her with roses outside her Moscow flat as she climbed into her white stretched limousine and swept away to be



Alla Pugacheva: Homage to an unlikely hero

congratulated by Boris Yeltsin in the Kremlin.

The popular *Komsomolskaya Pravda* newspaper devoted its front page to her picture and decorated its inside pages with extracts from her

songs, raving on with: "She is part of our life, a symbol of an entire era." The more sober *Kommersant* called her "the social-cultural phenomenon of the second half of the 20th century".

But the days when flame-haired Ms Pugacheva could convincingly strut in micro-skirts and shiny patent leather boots before goggle-eyed Soviet audiences are long past.

Leaders come and go - Brezhnev, Chernenko, Andropov, Gorbachev - but she has survived. Mr Yeltsin awarding her a medal for "service to the fatherland", and said: "I am happy to live in Pugacheva's epoch." The star replied: "You are like a father to me."

When she came only 15th in the Eurovision Song Contest in Dublin two years ago, many

thought she would step into the shadows, leaving the limelight to her crooner husband, Filipp Kirkorov, almost 20 years younger, and her daughter, also a singer. But what do Russians care what the West thinks?

She is a peculiarly Russian figure - the Slavic Cilla Black with a dash of Liz Taylor, constantly battling the loathed tax authorities, with her implausible argument that Russia's pop stars are poor - though they ride around in vast limos. The taxmen estimate she still earns up to \$33,000 (£24,000) an hour in concerts, plus income from her 150 million records.

Russia, caught in a terrible depression, needs its heroes. Ms Pugacheva takes her mission seriously, and is food of telling fans: "We're Russians, we'll adapt, we'll survive." She has,

Israel jails politician over bribery

A JERUSALEM court yesterday sentenced Aryeh Deri, one of the most powerful politicians in Israel, to four years in prison for taking bribes.

The verdict is a serious blow to his party, Shas, which has strong support among Israelis of Middle Eastern origin.

After first citing the prophets Amos and Jeremiah on corruption, Judge Yaakov Tzemach said: "Bribe-taking became a way of life for him. He presented an extreme danger to the nation and people. Too much mercy would be cruel to

BY PATRICK COCKBURN
in Jerusalem

society," Mr Deri said he would appeal.

He was found guilty last month of taking bribes worth \$155,000 (£97,000) over a five-year period when he was director-general and later minister of the interior.

Distraught Shas supporters, dressed in the distinctive black hats and three-quarter length coats of the ultra-orthodox, pressed against the gates of the court yesterday as the verdict

was read out. Some chanted: "Aryeh is innocent." Others said he was "framed because he was a Sephardi" - a Jew originating from the Middle East.

Not all of Mr Deri's supporters are religious. One woman wearing secular clothes standing outside the court said she backed him because of his advocacy for social reform: "He created a social revolution for people in the slums. What has happened is terrible."

It is unclear how long Deri can remain a power broker after yesterday's sentence,

which included a \$40,000 fine. He remains leader of Shas, the party he virtually created, and which has 10 seats in the 120-member Knesset (parliament). He will not go to jail until the Supreme Court has heard his appeal, well after the Israeli election on 17 May.

Shas is painting Deri's trial as persecution of the Sephardi community. He is unlikely to step down while he retains the support of the revered spiritual leader of Shas, Avadia Yosef, who was having an emergency operation yesterday.

NOTICE TO HARRODS CARDHOLDERS

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Hobby police get serious

EUROPEAN TIMES
BERLIN

THE VOLUNTEER Police Reserves of Berlin, set up in the West on the day the Wall was built, have been under-employed of late. Restricted to the unchallenging task of keeping an eye on dogs that offend against the laws of hygiene, these vigilantes of the Free World have been complaining of boredom. More than a few have taken to gun-running, burglary and marching in Nazi uniforms.

But help is at hand. Ten years after the fall of the Wall, this ageing band of Cold War warriors are to ride again. The city government has drafted a new law which, once through, will give them new powers. Their outfit would be known as the "Volunteer Police Service" and they would be allowed for the first time to drive police patrol cars.

Then, no longer will they confine their loiterings to the city's parks. Berlin's "Hobby Polizisten", as they are contemptuously known to their professional colleagues, could in future be sent after thieves, burglars and thugs. They will be encouraged to bring unruly motorists to order, dishing out fines in situations where their jaded, full-time colleagues might be inclined to turn a blind eye. And despite the expanded duties, they will have enhanced responsibility for Berlin's notorious plague of dog excrement. No pooch will be able to hide from their watchful gaze.

The reorganisation is intended to lighten the burden of the professional police force. Since the borders to the east became porous, Berlin has emerged as Germany's crime capital, host to a swarm of mafias originating from the former Soviet Union. But there aren't enough policemen, and the near-

bankrupt local government lacks funds to hire more. According to the police union, Berlin is short of 1,000 professionals on the beat. The shortage was fatally exposed in February when the Israeli general consulate was given inadequate protection from Kurdish demonstrators. Israeli guards stepped into the void, fired into the crowd and killed four protesters.

The police should be delighted with the help they are getting. But they are not. "Members of the Police Reserve will be given only a two-week crash course," complained Eberhard Schönborg, head of the police trade union of Berlin. "Then they will be squeezed into a uniform, a weapon placed into their hands, to be let loose among the population."

Whether the course is too long or too short is a moot point since, in the past, members of the criminal fraternity sought out the volunteers' training establishments to sharpen their own skills. An investigation a few years ago revealed that the ranks of the volunteers harboured more than 100 convicted criminals.

Also worrying many Berliners is the prospect of these new sheriff's deputies with guns in their hands. After a series of gun-related incidents, a parliamentary inquiry was conducted into the illegal weapons trade in the city in 1993. Twelve neo-Nazi gun-dealers were identified. Five of them were police volunteers.

Berliners, especially left-wingers, do not fancy their chances. The Bill is due to go before the city parliament at the end of this month. If it passes, the police union has already indicated that it will fight it all the way to Germany's Constitutional Court.

IMRE KARACS



A woman preparing to vote in the presidential election in Algiers yesterday AP

Algerians vote in one-horse election race

ALGERIANS VOTED to choose the country's first civilian president since 1965 yesterday - knowing even before they cast their votes who the winner would be. The race was reduced to little more than farce after six of the seven candidates pulled out, fearing that the balloting was rigged.

The single remaining candidate, Abdelaziz Bouteflika, viewed as the choice of the powerful military, said that he would accept victory only if backed by a large majority of the electorate and a massive turnout. Early polling was moderate but this did not deter Mr Bouteflika's campaign managers from insisting that the turnout would be sufficient to confer legitimacy on any victory.

The anti-army figures in the ballot pulled out in protest at alleged fraud in early polling for security forces and at mobile stations in Algeria's vast Saharan expanse. However, it also appeared to be a revolt against the army-backed order that has bred fraud and corruption since Algeria gained independence from France in 1962.

The withdrawal was a blow to hopes that the voting would heal divisions in a nation caught up in a cycle of violence since

BY EILEEN BYRNE
in Algiers

1992, when the Islamic insurgency began. Some 75,000 people have been killed since then.

The sole candidate, meanwhile, ruled out any form of power-sharing if elected. Asked if he might consider forming a government of reconciliation with opposition figures, as has been mooted, he said there was no question of a dialogue with the Islamic Salvation Front as such, but he left the door open to informal contacts. "I shall not negotiate with a dissolved party. On the other hand, I shall negotiate with individuals."

Polling stations kept all seven names in the ballot, so people could still choose someone other than Mr Bouteflika - perhaps even forcing a second round.

The six who withdrew appealed yesterday to their supporters to "follow through with their shared effort calmly and peacefully". The Socialist Forces Front said that demonstrations against the alleged fraud were planned for central Algiers today.

The candidates, who spanned the political spectrum, pulled out after President

Liamine Zeroual refused to discuss the claims of fraud, suggesting that they file formal complaints. In a nationwide address, Mr Zeroual - a retired general stepping down 18 months before his five-year term ends - sharply criticised the move and ordered the election to continue.

Mr Bouteflika has been hailed in the press as the "candidate of consensus", a derogatory reference to his backing from a wide swath of the establishment - including the National Liberation Front which ruled Algeria for three decades, the powerful UGTA union, and a moderate Islamic party in the coalition government.

Despite the setback, the presidential campaign has not been marred by the bloodshed of the 1995 general election. Security at polling booths was all but invisible - a sign of the dwindling violence in the region. In previous votes, heavily armed soldiers kept watch.

However, 10 people were reported killed on Monday by anti-government guerrillas in the western province of Mascara, and Algerian newspapers reported several clashes between government troops and Muslim rebels.

China clamps down on anniversary protests

DISSIDENTS WERE under tight surveillance yesterday as police cordoned off the grave of Hu Yaobang, the reformist leader whose death exactly 10 years ago sparked China's 1989 pro-democracy movement. At least two dissidents have been prevented from travelling to Mr Hu's grave in the south-east province of Jiangxi.

BY TERESA POOLE
in Peking

China's leadership fears that a string of imminent anniversaries could be a focus for protests over grievances, including rising urban unemployment and corruption. "We have been ordered by our superiors not to organise or en-

courage students to mourn Hu Yaobang," said an administrator at Gongqing College in Gongqingcheng city, where Mr Hu's grave lies.

Yesterday morning in Jiangxi, a journalist for the Associated Press saw several motorcades with police escorts entering the Yaobang cemetery, which was closed to the public. The reporter

was then detained by police for four hours and afterwards ordered not to leave his hotel.

In Peking, a member of the China Democracy Party, Gao Hongming, said he and two colleagues from the outlawed group had paid their respects to Mr Hu - who was the Communist Party head for six years in the Eighties - near Tiananmen

Square on Wednesday, even though they were tailed by police. Yesterday, he was under tighter surveillance.

"The China Democracy Party, like the people of China, will cherish forever those who speak the truth and do good deeds for the people," the dissidents said in a statement to mark the anniversary.

Mr Hu was the most reformist of China's leaders but was ousted in January 1987, for being too soft on "bourgeois liberalism". Just two days after his death was announced on 15 April 1989, the first procession to Tiananmen Square took place, starting a movement which ended on 4 June when tanks and soldiers swept through Peking.

The Independent/Independent on Sunday have joined forces with SeaFrance European Life to offer you excellent discounts on holidays to Champagne. From just £49 per person you can take a break in the heart of the Champagne region, inclusive of return ferry crossing, two nights' accommodation and a complimentary bottle of champagne on your arrival.

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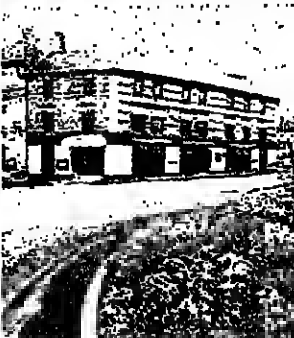
Simply call SeaFrance European Life on 0870 242 4455, quoting The Independent Champagne Offer. To qualify for your offer you must collect four of the ten tokens printed in The Independent and The Independent on Sunday from Friday 9 April to Sunday 18 April (inclusive). At least one of the tokens must be from The Independent on Sunday. Then, to validate your offer after booking, send your tokens with the completed application form to The Independent Champagne Offer, SeaFrance European Life, 10 Kerry Street, Leeds, LS18 4AW. Please note that all bookings must be made between 10 April and 30 April 1999 (inclusive).



PARTICIPATING HOTELS

Epernay, Le Thibault IV ★★

Situated 20km south of Epernay on the Champagne Route in the heart of the Champagne region, Le Thibault offers a good standard of accommodation, with reasonably sized rooms and en suite bathrooms. The hotel's restaurant is well known across the Champagne area, serving both gastronomic menus and champagne dinners. The hotel can arrange a free visit to local wine-cellars and, although this does not include wine-tasting, we're sure that it will be an insight into the Champagne world!



Epernay, Hostellerie de la Reine Blanche ★★★

The village of Vertus lies 20km south of Epernay on the Champagne Route in the heart of the Champagne region. The charm and warmth offered by the Hostellerie de la Reine Blanche is quite typical of the hotels in this region. The hotel has a swimming-pool, sauna and fitness room and the bedrooms are large and sumptuously decorated, with en suite bathrooms. The Hostellerie also boasts wine-cellars holding vineyards dating back to 1929 to accompany its restaurant's fine gastronomic cuisine.



Troyes, Forêt d'Orient ★★★

Beautiful natural setting, in the heart of the Champagne region, between two lakes for water sports and on an 18-hole golf course, 15km from medieval Troyes and 100km from the Epernay champagne cellars. Relax around the heated pool, enjoy a round of golf or archery (both playable locally), or exercise in the free fitness room. The generous-sized rooms offer satellite TV, telephone and lovely bedrooms with separate w.c. The restaurant has a poolside terrace offering good-value menus. Family rooms available.



Reims, L'Assiette Champenoise ★★★★★

Located just 2km from the centre of Reims, with its magnificent Gothic cathedral and famous champagne cellars. Set in large grounds, this exquisite hotel offers excellent facilities and a high level of comfort in relaxing surroundings. In addition to the heated indoor swimming-pool, guests have free use of the sauna. A gastronomic experience at the popular restaurant is certainly not to be missed. All bedrooms have satellite TV and mini-bar. Buffet breakfast and private outdoor parking.



Destination and hotel name	10/04-30/04		01/05-27/05		28/05-31/08		01/09-31/10	
	2 nts	Ex nt	2 nts	Ex nt	2 nts	Ex nt	2 nts	Ex nt
Epernay Le Thibault IV	49	27	59	28	69	29	59	28
Troyes Forêt d'Orient	69	28	79	29	89	31	79	29
Epernay La Reine Blanche	79	37	89	38	99	40	89	38
Reims Assiette Champenoise	89	38	99	42	109	44	99	42

Destination and hotel name	10/04-30/04		01/05-27/05		28/05-31/08		01/09-31/10	
	2 nts	Ex nt	2 nts	Ex nt	2 nts	Ex nt	2 nts	Ex nt
Epernay Le Thibault IV	59	27	69	28	79	29	69	28
Troyes Forêt d'Orient	79	28	89	29	99	31	89	29
Epernay La Reine Blanche	89	37	99	38	109	40	99	38
Reims Assiette Champenoise	99	38	109	42	119	44	109	42

All prices shown are per person and in pounds sterling

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News desk: 0171-293 2636 Fax: 0171-293 2098

BUSINESS

No recession this year, says BCC

BRIEFING

Electra thwarts £1.3bn 3i bid
THE £1.3bn 3i bid for rival venture capital group, Electra, looked set to collapse last night after Electra investors voted to back the board's proposal to thwart the bid. The board needed to win support from at least 75 per cent of shareholders who voted on the proposal at yesterday's extraordinary meeting and after several recounts, Electra won support from more than 76 per cent.

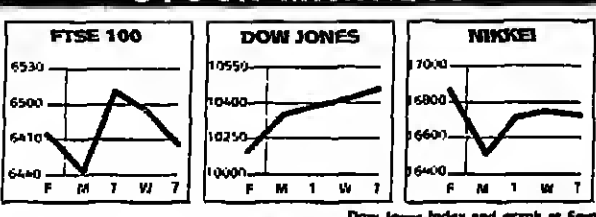
3i has stated that it will withdraw its cash-and-shares offer for the trust if the Electra deal is approved. 3i had earlier in the day complained to the Takeover Panel after Swiss Re, the insurance group, announced while the meeting was still going on it had bought 15 per cent of the trust and was seeking to develop a commercial relationship with Electra.

Asda nets £1.5m fresh cod deal
ASDA yesterday launched an unusual deal with four Grimsby trawlers to supply over 100 Asda stores with fresh cod. The deal guarantees £1.5m a year to the owners of the four boats in the Asda fleet, irrespective of market prices. Due to maritime superstition about the colour green, the "Asda ensign" the fleet will fly under has been changed to blue and white instead of the company's green and white corporate colours.

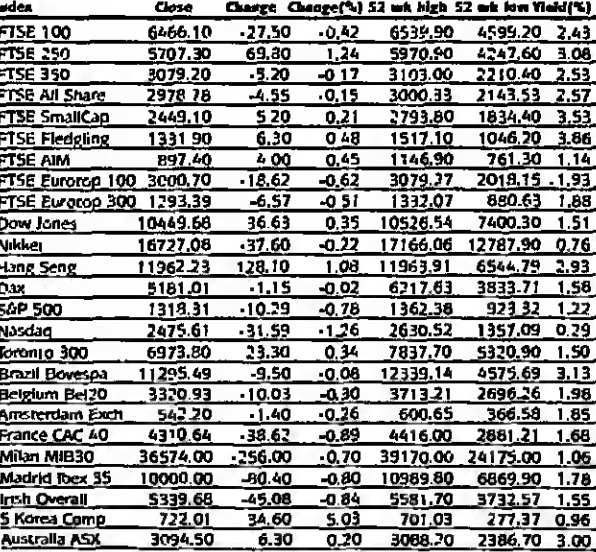
Chris Hodgson, category manager for fish at Asda, is pictured with the crew of *Jubilee Quest*, one of the four trawlers.

Cadbury buys Hawaiian Punch
CADBURY SCHWEPPE'S is buying Hawaiian Punch, America's leading fruit punch brand, from Procter & Gamble for \$203m (£126m). The drink is sold mainly in the United States, where it will join Cadbury's Doctor Pepper carbonated brand. Hawaiian Punch recorded sales of \$133m last year.

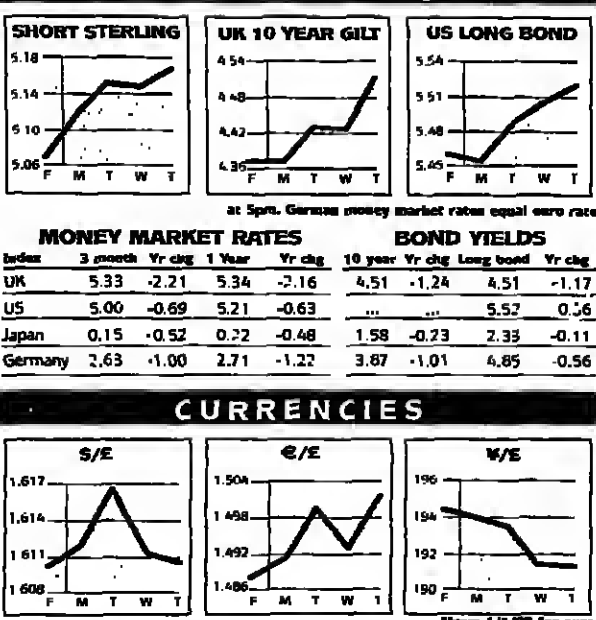
STOCK MARKETS



INTEREST RATES



CURRENCIES



OTHER INDICATORS

Index	Close	Chg	%	Yr Ago
Brent Oil (\$)	14.75	0.28	1.93	12.53
Gold (\$)	382.85	1.00	0.26	381.25
Silver (\$)	4.88	-0.06	-1.24	4.94

TOURIST RATES

Country	Rate	Country	Rate
Australia (\$)	2.4548	Mexican (nuevo peso)	13.96
Austria (schillings)	19.94	Netherlands (guilder)	3.1954
Belgium (francs)	58.61	New Zealand (\$)	2.8624
Canada (\$)	2.3525	Norway (kroner)	12.17
Cyprus (pounds)	0.8373	Portugal (escudos)	289.50
Denmark (kroner)	10.85	Saudi Arabia (riyals)	5.9770
Finland (markka)	8.6523	Singapore (\$)	2.5739
France (francs)	9.5083	South Africa (rand)	9.4218
Germany (marks)	2.8464	Spain (pesetas)	240.71
Greece (drachma)	471.13	Sweden (kronor)	13.06
Hong Kong (\$)	12.12	Switzerland (francs)	2.3354
Ireland (pounds)	1.1412	Thailand (bahts)	54.43
India (rupees)	62.10	Turkey (liras)	590080
Israel (shekels)	6.0011	USA (\$)	1.5759
Italy (lira)	2823		
Japan (yen)	187.65		
Malaysia (ringgits)	5.8200		
Malta (lira)	0.6188		

THE UK ECONOMY is set to avoid recession this year, according to a new survey, with signs of recovery beginning to appear even in the struggling manufacturing sector.

Evidence from the British Chambers of Commerce (BCC) quarterly survey - the most comprehensive study of its kind - suggests the economy has turned the corner, analysts said. Growth in the first quarter is still expected to be weak, but the economy is well positioned to bounce back later in the year.

BY LEA PATERSON

Neil Parker of Royal Bank of Scotland said: "This shows we are over the worst of the turmoil. It's time to get optimistic about the UK economy."

Activity was subdued throughout much of Britain during the first three months of the year, the BCC said. Manufacturing sales to the domestic market, for example, were at their lowest level since the end of the last recession.

economic activity - such as manufacturers' order levels - were significantly improved. This suggests growth will pick up markedly as the year goes on.

The survey results for the services sector were particularly healthy. The sector as a whole reported positive UK sales growth for the first time in a year, while service exports expanded for the first time in six months. As with the manufacturing sector, the BCC survey found evidence of sharply improved business confidence.

In the City, gilts fell as traders scaled back their expectations of further interest-rate cuts. The pound strengthened against the euro to close at 66.53p.

Despite the upbeat tone of the survey, Dr Ian Peters, BCC deputy director-general, called the recovery "fragile" and urged the Bank of England to cut interest rates by a further quarter-point next month. He said: "The important thing is not to get carried away. The onus on the Bank must now be to nurture this fledgling upturn."

But even Dr Peters - a long-time advocate of lower interest rates - acknowledged that the bottom of the UK interest-rate cycle was now approaching.

He said: "A quarter-point cut is necessary, but after that we will be getting to the point where the scope for further cuts will be limited."

Fewer of the survey respondents expressed concerns about the level of sterling which, contrary to expectations, has strengthened against the euro since the beginning of the year.

Dr Peters commented: "Our view is that business is now starting to cope with the strong pound."

Adjustments to sterling's continued strength could be one factor behind the falling levels of employment seen in the survey, economists said.

Job creation in the services sector slowed down to levels not seen for almost six years, according to the BCC.

The survey showed that there continued to be net job losses in manufacturing.

C&W's protests fail in Japan

A RUMBLING dispute about foreign access to Japan's telecoms market escalated yesterday after the board of IDC, the long-distance telecoms operator, recommended a controversial takeover bid from Nippon Telegraph and Telephone, the state-owned telecoms giant.

The bid, thought to value IDC at 63bn yen (£330m), was approved at a marathon board meeting yesterday despite opposition from Cable & Wireless, the UK group that owns 17.7 per cent of IDC, and protests by British politicians.

It emerged yesterday that Stephen Byers, the Trade and Industry Secretary, wrote to Japan's post and telecommunications ministry in March raising questions about NTT's bid. The Prime Minister, Tony Blair, is also understood to have intervened in the battle on C&W's behalf.

"We have pointed out that a successful bid from NTT would raise regulatory and competition issues," a spokeswoman for the Department of Trade and Industry said yesterday. The Japanese government has a controlling shareholding in NTT but is also responsible for regulating Japanese telecoms.

C&W believes IDC's recommendation of NTT's bid flouts an agreement dating from 1986, when IDC was set up, allowing IDC shareholders to match any bid made for the company. C&W holds 17.7 per cent of IDC, whose other large shareholders include Toyota, the car giant, and the Itochu trading group. C&W is understood to have tabled an offer for the shares in IDC it does not own that values the company at 63.4bn yen.

According to sources in Japan the IDC board meeting, which lasted for four hours, approached the decision about the two bids "as a foregone conclusion".

BY PETER THAL LARSEN

When the decision came to a vote, all the Japanese board directors - who include representatives of Toyota and Itochu - voted for the NTT bid.

Rod Olsen, a former C&W director, and directors nominated by AirTouch, the US mobile phone group that owns 10 per cent of IDC, abstained, saying they had not been given enough information. Three other directors nominated by C&W abstained because of their involvement with C&W's offer.

A spokesman for C&W said the company was "disappointed" by the vote. However, he added: "We shall continue to protect our interest and ensure that our rights as a founder shareholder under the basic agreement should be honoured."

C&W is understood to be especially concerned about a new provision, due to be added to Japan's commercial code in the summer, which would allow majority shareholders to force minority holders to sell their shares. If IDC's other shareholders sell their shares to NTT the company could use the provision to force C&W - and potentially AirTouch - to sell out.

However, any such move would require the approval of the Japanese government as NTT's majority shareholder.

NTT is keen to buy IDC in order to establish itself in the international telecoms market after regulations preventing it from offering international calls are formally lifted on 1 July. However, C&W would like to own the business in order to offer a complete international service to multinational companies. IDC also has a fast-growing business carrying Internet traffic, which would fit with the Internet business C&W bought from MCI Worldcom last year.



Sir Michael Bishop is predicting casualties among UK no-frills airlines

Budget airlines face shake-out, says Bishop

THE HEAD of the UK's second-largest scheduled airline yesterday predicted a bloodbath between the low-cost carriers.

British Midland chairman Sir Michael Bishop said there would be "blood on the carpet" as budget airlines try to reposition themselves.

His comments came as British Midland revealed that profits for 1998 had tumbled by 34 per cent despite a record passenger total. Sir Michael said: "There will be some real blood on the carpet from the low-cost carriers at Stansted airport because people are coming into the market with a hybrid product that is neither one thing nor the other."

BY PHILIP THORNTON
Transport Correspondent

There were signs that budget airlines were moving away from the core concept, he said, highlighting Debonair's agreement to operate five aircraft on behalf of Lufthansa Cityline.

Sir Michael said British Midland had ruled out setting up a low-cost operation at Stansted, the London airport favoured by no-frills carriers.

He said budget airlines were not taking market share from British Midland. Its best routes in 1998 were Heathrow-Amsterdam, where it competes with easyJet, and Heathrow-Dublin, against Ryanair.

Pre-tax profits slipped from a record £18.7m in 1997 to £11.02m. Sir Michael said the fall was due to a £5m "windfall" from the British Airways strike in 1997 and a £4m start-up cost for a new London-Manchester service.

The Manchester service broke a 40-year BA monopoly. Sir Michael said the route moved into operating profit last month and his airline had taken a 30 per cent market share.

Turnover rose 3 per cent to £508.8m and passenger numbers were up 5 per cent to six million.

British Midland has won licences to serve New York, Washington DC, Boston and Miami in the US, subject to a new bilateral air services agreement.

Sir Alastair said he would only sanction Railtrack's £10bn "renewals" budget if it passed a test of "more quality and quantity". If it failed, it would be viewed as maintenance. He said he estimated the true figure was between £10bn and £20bn, including Railtrack's £10.5bn "enhancement" budget and a revised "renewals" category.

"I hope it is near the top of that range, but I look forward to learning more about it and what it will do for passengers and freight, as well as shareholders," he said.

Railtrack's £27bn plan was seen as an attempt to counter claims by the Rail Regulator that it was not prepared to take risks with its capital.

Sir Alastair was speaking to railway and engineering chiefs at the Institution of Civil Engineers' annual dinner.

The stock market closed before Sir Alastair spoke, but Railtrack shares fell 2 per cent to close down 25p at 1.294p.

Barclays refuses to pay headhunter's search fee

BARCLAYS BANK, the highest bidder for the troubled bank, was rocked earlier this week when its new chief executive, Mike O'Neill, quit because of heart problems, is refusing to pay all of the £500,000 search fee that was agreed with headhunters Spencer Stuart until a replacement for Mr O'Neill is found.

Barclays insists it is normal practice to make a small down payment when a headhunter is

BY ANDREW GARFIELD
Financial Editor

engaged but to full settlement of the fee to be delayed until the candidate has completed a trial period, usually of several months. "We are not paying for a second search," Barclays said yesterday, "although obviously there will be further expenses such as plane tickets."

Mr O'Neill was given a clean

bill of health in February when he was checked out by Spencer Stuart's doctor in London on Monday.

The fee for executive searches is generally pitched at 30 per cent of total annual package, including allowances and options. Mr O'Neill's package including allowances was worth up to £15m over three years.

Barclays is adamant that the checks were correctly carried

out and that there is no reason to drop Spencer Stuart and appoint another headhunting firm.

Barclays' board met yesterday for the second time this week and agreed to press ahead with the search. It believes that having done the initial winnowing it is at a relatively advanced stage. There is one candidate who was a strong contender before Mr O'Neill was appointed who the bank is trying to contact.

Insiders were adamant, however, that Barclays did not want to look as if any decision would be rushed.

There were suggestions yesterday that Barclays may appoint an internal candidate. John Varley, head of retail, and Chris Lendrum, head of corporate banking, are highly regarded. But City institutions believe the bank should try to find another international banker.

AROUND THE WORLD'S MARKETS

LONDON

MID-CAP shares again made the running as blue chips marked time. In another busy session Footsie ended above its worst level, off 27.5 points at 6,486.1.

Much of the action was among the 250 mid-cap shares and their index rose 0.8 to 5,707.3. The small caps made more modest headway. Asda was the day's best performing blue chip, jumping 17.25p to 178.5p on takeover rumours. RioTinto was up 92.5p to 1,004p, and Biffen 18p to 187.5p.

Derek Pain, page 21

NEW YORK

THE DOW JONES was trading modestly higher by mid-afternoon, with investors shifting out of the major blue-chips and into smaller cyclical stocks. Gains in the manufacturer Caterpillar and the chemicals group DuPont helped the Dow up 35 points to 10,447 in a heavy trading session.

"Money is shifting out of some of the largest 50 stocks and moving into those with more visible earnings growth. The shift is breathtaking in its swiftness and power," said one analyst.

TOKYO

STOCKS CLOSED modestly lower amid worries about the strength of the yen. The Nikkei 225 finished down 37.6 points - 0.22 per cent - at 16,727.08. June Nikkei futures ended 10 points lower.

Tetsuya Ishijima, chief strategist at Okasan Securities, said: "Since export-driven hi-tech manufacturers have surged significantly, investors and dealers were waiting to take profits. The fall in the Nasdaq and rise in the yen gave them an excuse." Fujitsu and Toshiba were among fallers.

SAO PAULO

PROFIT-taking sent Brazilian stocks lower in morning trade. Just before lunch, the benchmark Bovespa index was 138 points, or 1.22 per cent, lower at 11,167. The commercial real was unchanged from late Wednesday at 1.670-1.680 per dollar.

According to traders, the Central Bank's decision on Wednesday to cut interest rates by 5.5 per cent to 34 per cent was largely expected and therefore had little impact on stocks.

FRANKFURT

SHARES EDGED up in improving investor sentiment. The electronic Xetra DAX ended up 2.96 points - 0.06 per cent - at 5,189.72. The floor DAX closed flat at 5,181.01.

Telecoms shares tumbled on news of falling first-quarter sales at Deutsche Telekom. "The telecoms sector is disappointing with its numbers," an analyst said. However, growing confidence over the economic outlook after last week's surprise European interest-rate cut helped most cyclical stocks to close higher.

Takeovers don't need an EU directive

IT SEEMS hard to believe, given the shenanigans surrounding the bidding for Telecom Italia and Gucci, but most Continental countries have made big strides in establishing proper rules and codes to govern takeover bids. Judging by the events of the last few months, there is still a way to go on implementation, but don't forget that even in Britain, with its 30-year history of takeover regulation, it is only comparatively recently that the Takeover Panel has been able fully to stamp its authority on the City.

In the mid-1980s its guiding principles of fair play and equal treatment for all went as soundly ignored as they now seem to be on the Continent – a period of abuse which culminated ultimately in the great scandal of Guinness. The Continent is undeveloped in terms of takeover practice, but it seems to be getting there. All of which makes the purpose of the EU's proposed European directive on takeovers somewhat questionable.

In theory, the directive seems a perfectly reasonable piece of harmonisation. In a single market, reinforced by a single currency, and with growing cross-border takeover activity, it might seem quite sensi-



OUTLOOK

ble to establish a common set of rules and regulations. In practice, however, the directive is a lowest common denominator piece of legislation. In terms of investor protection, it falls far short of the Takeover Code in Britain, or indeed many of the fledgling regimes to govern takeovers being set up by other members of the EU.

The German presidency nonetheless seems determined to push the directive through. In order to make it more palatable to the City, where takeover practice is self-regulated, the Germans have inserted a compromise clause which would allow the courts in member countries to decline to hear legal cases brought

under the directive, and instead refer them for adjudication to the relevant authority – in Britain's case, the Takeover Panel.

Unfortunately, this doesn't really solve the problem, for the directive as drafted makes a complete hash of defining jurisdiction. For company law purposes, the directive establishes jurisdiction as the target company's country of incorporation. But for "bid procedure and realisation", whatever that means, jurisdiction is defined as the place where the target company is listed. Normally these two things are one and the same, but with increased use of non-national exchanges for share listing, there is a growing number of cases where they are not.

This creates considerable potential for vexatious litigation. For instance, takeovers could be stalled or halted by disputing jurisdiction. Certainly it is possible to envisage a scenario in which the Takeover Panel's advantages of speed, certainty and flexibility in policing takeovers would quite quickly be undermined. This in turn would damage the City by making its capital markets less efficient and as a consequence less competitive. For all these reasons, the Coun-

cil of Ministers must send this directive back to the drawing board when they consider it later this year. It helps no-one, but its potential for damage in the City is considerable.

ICI/Huntsman

PHREW! Finally got it away. After more than a year of trying, Charles Miller Smith, chief executive of ICI, has at last managed to dispose of some businesses. He's been trying since 1997, when he embarked on his "transformation" of ICI by buying Unilever's specialty chemicals business for £4.9bn. At the time, the transaction was widely seen as a triumph, but neither the City, nor Mr Miller Smith, anticipated the difficulty ICI would encounter in making the necessary disposals to pay for it.

Early attempts to sell ICI's industrial chemicals interests were floored by regulatory objections. The industry then went into one of its regular cyclical downturns. Conscious of ICI's need, those not constrained by competition concerns started to demand fire-sale prices. The unkind judgement would be to say that all this was entirely predictable and that Mr Miller Smith took a quite unac-

ceptable risk with his shareholders' money in embarking on this course. Perhaps, but what's done is done, and ICI now seems to be making a reasonable fist of extricating itself. The sale to Huntsman Corp is at a lower price than originally hoped for, nor does it offer the clean break ICI might have wanted. ICI will retain a 30 per cent stake for at least the next three years. But it does put ICI's planned disposal programme back on course, and that in itself is reason for relief.

Even so, ICI's market capitalisation continues to languish at less than it paid Unilever for the specialty chemicals interests, despite the recent pick up in the share price. Mr Miller Smith's strategy for ICI is hardly going to go down as one of the great corporate transformations of the decade, but at these depressed levels the stock market may be judging him too harshly. Certainly yesterday's deal could mark a turning of the tide, both for the share price, and for his own somewhat damaged reputation.

Polypipe/IMI

AS TAKEOVERS go, IMI's agreed £337m deal with Polypipe is not one to set the pulse racing. The manu-

facture of plastic pipes, drains and gutters is a dull old business. But, as the saying goes, someone has got to do it. And Polypipe has done it very well indeed.

With umpteen years of unbroken profits growth, Polypipe is one of the unsung steady eddies of Britain's troubled engineering sector. The deal has also netted a £36m windfall for its chairman and founder, Kevin McDonald. This might seem chickenfeed in an era of multi-billion pound internet fortunes, but then this is a manufacturing company and rarely does anyone want to put much a value any such enterprises these days.

In its own way Polypipe has been quite an innovator. Mr McDonald, a combative Yorkshireman, set up his first plastics business in the 1960s when plastic tubing was only just starting to replace metal and ceramics in the building materials industry. When Polypipe came to the stock market in 1985 with a value of £12m, it wasn't taken tremendously seriously.

Maybe it was the name – so similar to Polly Peck – or maybe the pin-striped suits of the Square Mile found the thick-accented York-

shireman and his drainage pipes not quite the thing. Given that Polypipe shares have outperformed the market by 226 per cent since then, there may be some regrets on this score.

Even so, IMI's offer is hardly anything to write home about. The 200p cash price gives an exit multiple of just 12-times current year earnings forecasts. IMI's interest is in bolting on Polypipe's plastic tubes to its own copper operations and reaping the consequent distribution synergies.

Counter bids shouldn't be entirely ruled out. IMI's price is a stingy one, and Polypipe has some very attractive market positions. Unfortunately, the most likely counter bidders might face competition problems. Hepworth would almost certainly like to buy Polypipe, but with a much smaller clay pipe deal referred to the MMC before Easter, it is hard to believe it would be able to steer the acquisition of Polypipe through the competition authorities.

It is with this in mind that fund managers are looking to Continental Europe for any rival bid. There's a chance the prey might yet slip through IMI's fingers.

News Analysis: Despite its disposals programme, the chemicals giant is still struggling against a mountain of debts

ICI solution may not prove strong enough

ICI MOVED a step closer to completing a mammoth corporate transformation yesterday when it announced the £1.7bn sale of three large businesses to Huntsman, the privately-owned US chemicals company.

The one-time stock market heavyweight, still struggling to reduce its multi-billion pound debts, sealed the crucial sale of its polyurethane, toxid and petrochemicals businesses nearly two years after it said it was planning the sale.

The deal with Huntsman was

BY ANDREW VERITY

greeted with relief in the City where shareholders have grown increasingly impatient with the slow pace of ICI's disposals. Yesterday the shares closed up 3 per cent at 653p.

The deal is the last major transaction in ICI's disposal programme, bringing the value of businesses sold off to £5.2bn. The group will keep a 30 per cent stake in the businesses for at least three years.

In the last two years, ICI has

begun to look in danger of being buried under a mountain of debt as it struggled to force through one of the most ambitious corporate transformations ever undertaken by a FTSE company.

Charles Miller Smith, ICI's chief executive, has wanted for two years to turn ICI into a modern business focused on specialty chemicals and paints. Since May 1997, when he spent £4.8bn buying specialty chemicals from former colleagues at Unilever, he has struggled to reduce the resulting debt.

Few analysts quarrel with the strategy. The plan is to complete the corporate transformation by getting rid of industrial chemicals – businesses that proved highly vulnerable to cyclical downturns following the Asian financial crisis.

But the timing has worked against ICI. Industrial chemicals are still suffering from the worldwide economic slow-down, and buyers are thin on the ground. Few public companies have the stomach for seeing a large chemicals business through such a deep trough in demand.

Where buyers have been found they have hardly been ideal. In October last year ICI called off the sale of its Crosfield chemicals business to WR Grace, a US company after talks collapsed over price and terms. In January ICI suffered a double blow when US regulators blocked the £700m sale of its worldwide Toxide businesses – which manufactures paint-whitening chemicals – to DuPont, the US chemicals giant. At the same time ICI had to shed



Jon Huntsman, Huntsman chairman (left), and Charles Miller Smith, ICI's CEO, announcing the deal at ICI headquarters in London yesterday. *Margit Delaporte*

500 jobs from other divisions in Runcorn and Warrington.

Coming at a time when ICI was spending half its earnings on servicing its debts, the failed sales devastated ICI's share price. Even after yesterday's uptake, the shares remain more than 40 per cent below their peak a year ago.

Huntsman, a family business owned and run by its effusive chairman John Huntsman, has

no need to soothe anxious shareholders as they await the upturn. But while in that respect it seems an ideal buyer, it also has a reputation for buying on the cheap, at the bottom of the cycle. Observers believe shareholder concern about the debts may have forced Mr Miller Smith's hand at the negotiating table.

"These deals have not realised the value they could have

done," said Michael Eastwood, an analyst at Dresdner Kleinwort Benson. "However I doubt they could have got a better price at this stage of the chemicals cycle. The strategy is 100 per cent right. But they've been stuffed by the market, stuffed by Asia and stuffed by the strength of sterling."

To some the prices fetched are evidence that yesterday's deal, trumpeted as good value

for ICI, was really a fire-sale. The polyurethane business was sold at a multiple of 11.7 times last year's trading profit – an average valuation for the sector. But Huntsman bought Toxide for £150m less than DuPont offered, at a multiple of just eight times last year's earnings.

"The chemicals industry is notorious for companies trying to get the better of each other, and without a doubt the prices are not high," said David Phillips, an analyst at Sutherlands, the stockbroker.

Elliott Zisman, of HSBC Securities, estimates that the petrochemicals side of the business has been sold at a multiple of just 0.23 times its sales. "The businesses have been sold at prices which you normally wouldn't offer a trade buyer, even at the bottom of the cycle," he says.

ICI has more sales in store: executives now want to sell the acrylates business. But the City is still waiting for the group to escape its mountainous debts.

After yesterday's sale, ICI's net debts will drop from £4.2bn to £2.9bn. But earnings will also fall: the group will still be earning only 2.3 times the cost of its debts. "The debts are quite a destroyer of value and this sale was absolutely crucial. The group is worth more now. But the share price still reflects the hope of a really big deal that will get the debts down. You can expect ICI's valuation to be lower in future," said Mr Phillips.

TEL: 0171 293 2222

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FAX: 0171 293 2505

Legal Notices

NOTICE UNDER SECTION 12(2) OF THE RAILWAYS ACT 1993

The Rail Regulator ("the Regulator"), pursuant to section 12(2) of the Railways Act 1993 ("the Act") hereby gives notice as follows:

(1) In respect of the network licence of Railtrack PLC ("the network licence") and the passenger licences which have been issued to each of the franchise operators (other than Island Line Limited) and Heathrow Express Limited ("the passenger licences") all under section 8 of the Act he proposes to make the following modifications:

(i) by amending Condition 8 (Timetabling) of the network licence; and

(ii) by amending the Condition entitled "Timetabling" in each of the passenger licences (being Condition 9 in the template form of licence for passenger operators).

(2) The amendments to the network licence require Railtrack PLC to plan to enable temporary changes to the timetable for repair, maintenance and enhancement works to be specified and resulting timetable change procedures to be completed by 12 weeks before the change takes effect; to provide access to information about the changes to specified persons to comply with certain procedures in carrying out those obligations and as to circumstances in which delay in compliance does not breach the obligation.

(3) The amendments to the passenger licences require holder to comply with certain procedures in carrying out its obligations in relation to Railtrack PLC's performance of the obligations referred to in paragraph (2) and to make specified information available to passengers within a specified period.

(4) The reason why the Regulator proposes to make the modifications is to establish clear obligations on each licence holder in respect of the process to make changes to the national timetable arising from engineering works so that normally the revised timetable will be available 12 weeks before it applies and associated information (such as fares) will be available within the following three weeks.

(5) A copy of the draft proposed modifications can be obtained (free of charge) from the address below by telephone (0171 282 2001), fax (0171 282 2045), E-mail: com@rail.gov.uk.

(6) Any representations or objections to the proposed modifications may be made in writing on or before 14 May 1999 to the Regulator at the Office of the Rail Regulator, 1 Watlington Square, 138-142 Holborn, London EC1N 2TQ. [Ref: D Chapman].

MICHAEL BESWICK
Director, Network Regulation
daily authorised by the Rail Regulator
Friday 16th April 1999.

Legal Notices

NOTICE OF INTENTION TO APPLY TO THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR ENVIRONMENT, TRANSPORT AND THE REGIONS FOR CONFIRMATION OF BYLAWS RELATING TO THE WEST COAST TRAINS LIMITED RAILWAY

Notice is hereby given pursuant to section 67 of the Transport Act 1962 and section 129 of the Railways Act 1993 that West Coast Trains Limited have made bylaws relating to the West Coast Trains Limited railway and intend to apply to the Secretary of State for Environment, Transport and the Regions for his confirmation.

A copy of the bylaws in respect of which application for confirmation is to be made can be inspected free of charge for a period of 28 days starting from the date of this notice appearing at West Coast Trains Limited's registered office, 120 Campden Hill Road, London W8 7AR between the hours of 09.00 and 16.00 Mondays to Fridays and at the Customer Reception, Opposite Platform 14, Euston Station, Euston Road, London NW1 2HS between the hours of 08.00 and 20.00 Monday to Saturdays and a copy thereof can be obtained for a charge of 50p either by attending either of these places or by writing to Deputy Company Secretary, West Coast Trains Limited, 4th Floor West, Meridian, Smallbrook Queensway, Birmingham B5 4HA.

During the 28 day period any person affected by the new bylaws may make representation to the Secretary of State for Environment, Transport and the Regions by writing to him at the Department of Environment, Transport and the Regions, Zone 3/33 (Bye-laws), Great Minister House, 76 Marsham Street, London SW1P 4RP.

Dated 16th April 1999
D. Legge, Company Secretary
for and on behalf of West Coast Trains Limited,
120 Campden Hill Road, London W8 7AR.

Legal Notices

NOTICE OF INTENTION TO APPLY TO THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR ENVIRONMENT, TRANSPORT AND THE REGIONS FOR CONFIRMATION OF BYLAWS RELATING TO THE CROSSCOUNTRY TRAINS LIMITED RAILWAY

Notice is hereby given pursuant to section 67 of the Transport Act 1962 and section 129 of the Railways Act 1993 that CrossCountry Trains Limited have made bylaws relating to the CrossCountry Trains Limited railway and intend to apply to the Secretary of State for Environment, Transport and the Regions for his confirmation.

A copy of the bylaws in respect of which application for confirmation is to be made can be inspected free of charge for a period of 28 days starting from the date of this notice appearing at CrossCountry Trains Limited's registered office, 121 Campden Hill Road, London W8 7AR between the hours of 09.00 and 16.00 Mondays to Fridays and at the Customer Reception, Birmingham New Street Station, Queens Drive, Birmingham B2 4QA between the hours of 08.00 and 20.00 Mondays to Saturdays and a copy thereof can be obtained for a charge of 50p either by attending either of these places or by writing to Deputy Company Secretary, CrossCountry Trains Limited, 4th Floor West, Meridian, Smallbrook Queensway, Birmingham B5 4HA.

During the 28 day period any person affected by the new bylaws may make representation to the Secretary of State for Environment, Transport and the Regions by writing to him at the Department of Environment, Transport and the Regions, Zone 3/33 (Bye-laws), Great Minister House, 76 Marsham Street, London SW1P 4RP.

Dated 16th April 1999
D. Legge, Company Secretary
for and on behalf of CrossCountry Trains Limited,
121 Campden Hill Road, London W8 7AR.

GANDERTON, Ernest Herbert
Late of 10, St. John's Road,
London E5, died there on 27 February 1998.
(Estate agent: 020 7000 0000)

GREEN, Max Ernest Green,
late of 10, St. John's Road,
London E5, died there on 11 November 1998.
(Estate agent: 020 7000 0000)

HAYWARD, Pauline Anne
Late of 10, St. John's Road,
London E5, died there on 25 December 1998.
(Estate agent: 020 7000 0000)

KNOCK, Walter Robert Knox,
late of 10, St. John's Road,
London E5, died there on 17 January 1999.
(Estate agent: 020 7000 0000)

PUNNELL, Eric Punnett,
late of 10, St. John's Road,
London E5, died there on 11 February 1998.
(Estate agent: 020 7000 0000)

RUBERTS, Ronald Walter
Late of 10, St. John's Road,
London E5, died there on 11 February 1998.
(Estate agent: 020 7000 0000)

The list of the above named
persons is given to the Treasury
Secretary (H.V. Duce) under
the provisions of the
Succession Act 1925, and the
Treasury Secretary may take steps
to administer the estate.

Unusual Gifts

A NEWSPAPER for just 99p
1999, 1998, 1997, 1996, 1995, 1994, 1993, 1992, 1991, 1990, 1989, 1988, 1987, 1986, 1985, 1984, 1983, 1982, 1981, 1980, 1979, 1978, 1977, 1976, 1975, 1974, 1973, 1972, 1971, 1970, 1969, 1968, 1967, 1966, 1965, 1964, 1963, 1962, 1961, 1960, 1959, 1958, 1957, 1956, 1955, 1954, 1953, 1952, 1951, 1950, 1949, 1948, 1947, 1946, 1945, 1944, 1943, 1942, 1941, 1940, 1939, 1938, 1937, 1936, 1935, 1934, 1933, 1932, 1931, 1930, 1929, 1928, 1927, 1926, 1925, 1924, 1923, 1922, 1921, 1920, 1919, 1918, 1917, 1916, 1915, 1914, 1913, 1912, 1911, 1910, 1909, 1908, 1907, 1906, 1905, 1904, 1903, 1902, 1901, 1900, 1899, 1898, 1897, 1896, 1895, 1894, 1893, 1892, 1891, 1890, 1889, 1888, 1887, 1886, 1885, 1884, 1883, 1882, 1881, 1880, 1879, 1878, 1877, 1876, 1875, 1874, 1873, 1872, 1871, 1870, 1869, 1868, 1867, 1866, 1865, 1864, 1863, 1862, 1861, 1860, 1859, 1858, 1857, 1856, 1855, 1854, 1853, 1852, 1851, 1850, 1849, 1848, 1847, 1846, 1845, 1844, 1843, 1842, 1841, 1840, 1839, 1838, 1837, 1836, 1835, 1834, 1833, 1832, 1831, 1830, 1829, 1828, 1827, 1826, 1825, 1824, 1823, 1822, 1821, 1820, 1819, 1818, 1817, 1816, 1815, 1814, 1813, 1812, 1811, 1810, 1809, 1808, 1807, 1806, 1805, 1804, 1803, 1802, 1801, 1800, 1799, 1798, 1797, 1796, 1795, 1794, 1793, 1792, 1791, 1790, 1789, 1788, 1787, 1786, 1785, 1784, 1783, 1782, 1781, 1780, 1779, 1778, 1777, 1776, 1775, 1774, 1773, 1772, 1771, 1770, 1769, 1768, 1767, 1766, 1765, 1764, 1763, 1762, 1761, 1760, 1759, 1758, 1757, 1756, 1755, 1754, 1753, 1752, 1751, 1750, 1749, 1748, 1747, 1746, 1745, 1744, 1743, 1742, 1741, 1740, 1739, 1738, 1737, 1736, 1735, 1734, 1733, 1732, 1731, 1730, 1729, 1728, 1727, 1726, 1725, 1724, 1723, 1722, 1721, 1720, 1719, 1718, 1717, 1716, 1715, 1714, 1713, 1712, 1711, 1710, 1709, 1708, 1707, 1706, 1705, 1704, 1703, 1702, 1701, 1700, 1699, 1698, 1697, 1696, 1695, 1694, 1693, 1692, 1691, 1690, 1689, 1688, 1687, 1686, 1685, 1684, 1683, 1682, 1681, 1680, 1679, 1678, 1677, 1676, 1675, 1674, 1673, 1672, 1671, 1670, 1669, 1668, 1667, 1666, 1665, 1664, 1663, 1662, 1661, 1660, 1659, 1658, 1657, 1656, 1655, 1654, 1653, 1652, 1651, 1650, 1649, 1648, 1647, 1646, 1645, 1644, 1643, 1642, 1641, 1640, 1639, 1638, 1637, 1636, 1635, 1634, 1633, 1632, 1631, 1630, 1629, 1628, 1627, 1626, 1625, 1624, 1623, 1622, 1621, 1620, 1619, 1618, 1617, 1616, 1615, 1614, 1613, 1612, 1611, 1610, 1609, 1608, 1607, 1606, 1605, 1604, 1603, 1602, 1601, 1600, 1599, 1598, 1597, 1596, 1595, 1594, 1593, 1592, 1591, 1590, 1589, 1588, 1587, 1586, 1585, 1584, 1583, 1582, 1581, 1580, 1579, 1578, 1577, 1576, 1575, 1574, 1573, 1572, 1571, 1570, 1569, 1568, 1567, 1566, 1565, 1564, 1563, 1562, 1561, 1560, 1559, 1558, 1557, 1556, 1555, 1554, 1553, 1552, 1551, 1550, 1549, 1548, 1547, 1546, 1545, 1544, 1543, 1542, 1541, 1540, 1539, 1538, 1537, 1536, 1535, 1534, 1533, 1532, 1531, 1530, 1529, 1528, 1527, 1526, 1525, 1524, 1523, 1522, 1521, 1520, 1519, 1518, 1517, 1516, 1515, 1514, 1513, 1512, 1511, 1510, 1509, 1508, 1507, 1506, 1505, 1504, 1503, 1502, 1501, 1500, 1499, 1498, 1497, 1496, 1495, 1494, 1493, 1492, 1491, 1490, 1489, 1488, 1487, 1486, 1485, 1484, 1483, 1482, 1481, 1480, 1479, 1478, 1477, 1476, 1475, 1474, 1473, 1472, 1471, 1470, 1469, 1468, 1467, 1466, 1465, 1464, 1463, 1462, 1461, 1460, 1459, 1458, 1457, 1456, 1455, 1454, 1453, 1452, 1451, 1450, 1449, 1448, 1447, 1446, 1445, 1444, 1443, 1442, 1441, 1440, 1439, 1438, 1437, 1436, 1435, 1434, 1433, 1432, 1431, 1430, 1429, 1428, 1427, 1426, 1425, 1424, 1423, 1422, 1421, 1420, 1419, 1418, 1417, 1416, 1415, 1414, 1413, 1412, 1411, 1410, 1409, 1408, 1407, 1406, 1405, 1404, 1403, 1402, 1401, 1400, 1399, 1398, 1397, 1396, 1395, 1394, 1393, 1392, 1391, 1390, 1389, 1388, 1387, 1386, 1385, 1384, 1383, 1382, 1381, 1380, 1379, 1378, 1377, 1376, 1375, 1374, 1373, 1372, 1371, 1370, 1369, 1368, 1367, 1366, 1365, 1364, 1363, 1362, 1361, 1360, 1359, 1358, 1357, 1356, 1355, 1354, 1353, 1352, 1351, 1350, 1349, 1348, 1347, 1346, 1345, 1344, 1343, 1342, 1341, 1340, 1339, 1338, 1337, 1336, 1335, 1334, 1333, 1332, 1331, 1330, 1329, 1328, 1327, 1326, 1325, 1324, 1323, 1322, 1321, 1320, 1319, 1318, 1317, 1316, 1315, 1314, 1313, 1312, 1311, 1310, 1309, 1308, 1307, 1306, 1305, 1304, 1303, 1302, 1301, 1300, 1299, 1298, 1297, 1296, 1295, 1294, 1293, 1292, 1291, 1290, 1289, 1288, 1287, 1286, 1285, 1284, 1283, 1282, 1281, 1280, 1279, 1278, 1277, 1276, 1275, 1274, 1273, 1272, 1271, 1270, 1269, 1268, 1267, 1266, 1265, 1264, 1263, 1262, 1261, 1260, 1259, 1258, 1257, 1256, 1255, 1254, 1253, 1252, 1251, 1250, 1249, 1248, 1247, 1246, 1245, 1244, 1243, 1242, 1241, 1240, 1239, 1238, 1237, 1236, 1235, 1234, 1233, 1232, 1231, 1230, 1229, 1228, 1227, 1226, 1225, 1224, 1223, 1222, 1221, 1220, 1219, 1218, 1217, 1216, 1215, 1214, 1213, 1212, 1211, 1210, 1209, 1208, 1207, 1206, 1205, 1204, 1203, 1202, 1201, 1200, 1199, 1198, 1197, 1196, 1195, 1194, 1193, 1192, 1191, 1190, 1189, 1188, 1187, 1186, 1185, 1184, 1183, 1182, 1181, 1180, 1179, 1178, 1177, 1176, 117

Friday 16 April 1999

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RISES				FALLS			
PRICE(P)	CHG(P)	%CHG		PRICE(P)	CHG(P)	%CHG	
MFI Furniture	43.25	7.00	18.80	Scania Higgs	126.80	-13.00	-9.35
James Plc	126.75	19.25	15.00	Brit Blatch	28.00	-1.50	-7.89
Delta Group Plc	176.50	17.25	10.00	Constra Bros	12.50	-0.50	-6.00
Wm Morris	167.50	19.00	10.00	Dixons Group	1397.00	-84.00	-5.71
M Tins Plc	104.00	92.50	10.10	Glaxo Wellco	1885.00	-113.00	-6.00
M Plc	298.90	27.00	9.53	Peimins & Int	987.90	-39.00	-5.59
Marvic Plc	478.50	38.50	9.00	BGS Group Plc	615.50	-50.00	-8.21
Hyphenated Int	21.00	18.00	8.96	Amerspace Plc	638.50	-35.50	-4.99
Group Plac	517.25	21.75	7.72	Unilever Plc	578.00	-30.00	-4.98
Granite Plc	569.25	39.25	8.42	Compass Group	699.50	-35.00	-4.93

TOP 20 VOLUMES at 5pm							
Stock	Vol.	Stock	Vol.	Stock	Vol.	Stock	Vol.
Shell Group Plc	35.00M	British Plc	21.27M	Maris & Agnew Ltd	14.60M	Shetland Invest	11.68M
Int Transp & Gen	28.00M	Brit Airways Plc	11.81M	Sparrow Ltd	14.60M	Emmery Group	11.47M
British Plc	23.13M	Volvo Plc	11.09M	Wm Morris	11.25M	Wm Morris	11.25M
Capital City Inds	21.31M	Brit Steel	15.53M	Glaxo Wellco	13.44M	BP Plc	11.25M
BP Amoco Plc	21.55M	Polyplex Plc	16.27M	Unilever Plc	12.30M	Smithkline Beecham	10.30M

MARKET BY HOUR							
Index	Value	Change	% Change	Index	Value	Change	% Change
FTSE 100	6453.5	Up 8.0	0.12	FTSE 100	6516.5	Up 16.0	0.25
FTSE 250	6499.3	Down 4.3	-0.07	FTSE 250	6500.7	Up 1.4	0.02
					6494.4	Up 1.4	0.02

STOCK MARKET							
Stock	Price	Change	% Change	Stock	Price	Change	% Change
45. Shell Group	695.4	0.3	0.04	15. Glaxo Wellco	1885.00	-113.00	-6.00
275. MFI Furniture	43.25	7.00	18.80	16. Glaxo Wellco	1885.00	-113.00	-6.00
123. James Plc	126.75	19.25	15.00	17. Glaxo Wellco	1885.00	-113.00	-6.00
85. Delta Group	176.50	17.25	10.00	18. Glaxo Wellco	1885.00	-113.00	-6.00
31. Wm Morris	167.50	19.00	10.00	19. Glaxo Wellco	1885.00	-113.00	-6.00
119. M Tins Plc	104.00	92.50	10.10	20. Glaxo Wellco	1885.00	-113.00	-6.00
75. M Plc	298.90	27.00	9.53	21. Glaxo Wellco	1885.00	-113.00	-6.00
75. M Plc	298.90	27.00	9.53	22. Glaxo Wellco	1885.00	-113.00	-6.00
75. M Plc	298.90	27.00	9.53	23. Glaxo Wellco	1885.00	-113.00	-6.00
75. M Plc	298.90	27.00	9.53	24. Glaxo Wellco	1885.00	-113.00	-6.00
75. M Plc	298.90	27.00	9.53	25. Glaxo Wellco	1885.00	-113.00	-6.00
75. M Plc	298.90	27.00	9.53	26. Glaxo Wellco	1885.00	-113.00	-6.00
75. M Plc	298.90	27.00	9.53	27. Glaxo Wellco	1885.00	-113.00	-6.00
75. M Plc	298.90	27.00	9.53	28. Glaxo Wellco	1885.00	-113.00	-6.00
75. M Plc	298.90	27.00	9.53	29. Glaxo Wellco	1885.00	-113.00	-6.00
75. M Plc	298.90	27.00	9.53	30. Glaxo Wellco	1885.00	-113.00	-6.00
75. M Plc	298.90	27.00	9.53	31. Glaxo Wellco	1885.00	-113.00	-6.00
75. M Plc	298.90	27.00	9.53	32. Glaxo Wellco	1885.00	-113.00	-6.00
75. M Plc	298.90	27.00	9.53	33. Glaxo Wellco	1885.00	-113.00	-6.00
75. M Plc	298.90	27.00	9.53	34. Glaxo Wellco	1885.00	-113.00	-6.00
75. M Plc	298.90	27.00	9.53	35. Glaxo Wellco	1885.00	-113.00	-6.00
75. M Plc	298.90	27.00	9.5				

Line	Stock	Price	Chg	Vol	P/E	Div	Yield	52 Wk High	52 Wk Low	Price	Chg	Vol	P/E	Div	Yield	52 Wk High	52 Wk Low
50	Form Tech	51.15	+3.30	34	91	0.35	0.83	177.00	100.00	127.75	0.00	41	162	0.85	1.18	187.50	110.00
51	Form Systems Corp	12.00	+0.00	10	10	0.00	0.00	12.00	12.00	12.00	0.00	10	10	0.00	0.00	12.00	12.00
52	Form Systems Corp	12.00	+0.00	10	10	0.00	0.00	12.00	12.00	12.00	0.00	10	10	0.00	0.00	12.00	12.00
53	Form Systems Corp	12.00	+0.00	10	10	0.00	0.00	12.00	12.00	12.00	0.00	10	10	0.00	0.00	12.00	12.00
54	Form Systems Corp	12.00	+0.00	10	10	0.00	0.00	12.00	12.00	12.00	0.00	10	10	0.00	0.00	12.00	12.00
55	Form Systems Corp	12.00	+0.00	10	10	0.00	0.00	12.00	12.00	12.00	0.00	10	10	0.00	0.00	12.00	12.00
56	Form Systems Corp	12.00	+0.00	10	10	0.00	0.00	12.00	12.00	12.00	0.00	10	10	0.00	0.00	12.00	12.00
57	Form Systems Corp	12.00	+0.00	10	10	0.00	0.00	12.00	12.00	12.00	0.00	10	10	0.00	0.00	12.00	12.00
58	Form Systems Corp	12.00	+0.00	10	10	0.00	0.00	12.00	12.00	12.00	0.00	10	10	0.00	0.00	12.00	12.00
59	Form Systems Corp	12.00	+0.00	10	10	0.00	0.00	12.00	12.00	12.00	0.00	10	10	0.00	0.00	12.00	12.00
60	Form Systems Corp	12.00	+0.00	10	10	0.00	0.00	12.00	12.00	12.00	0.00	10	10	0.00	0.00	12.00	12.00
61	Form Systems Corp	12.00	+0.00	10	10	0.00	0.00	12.00	12.00	12.00	0.00	10	10	0.00	0.00	12.00	12.00
62	Form Systems Corp	12.00	+0.00	10	10	0.00	0.00	12.00	12.00	12.00	0.00	10	10	0.00	0.00	12.00	12.00
63	Form Systems Corp	12.00	+0.00	10	10	0.00	0.00	12.00	12.00	12.00	0.00	10	10	0.00	0.00	12.00	12.00
64	Form Systems Corp	12.00	+0.00	10	10	0.00	0.00	12.00	12.00	12.00	0.00	10	10	0.00	0.00	12.00	12.00
65	Form Systems Corp	12.00	+0.00	10	10	0.00	0.00	12.00	12.00	12.00	0.00	10	10	0.00	0.00	12.00	12.00
66	Form Systems Corp	12.00	+0.00	10	10	0.00	0.00	12.00	12.00	12.00	0.00	10	10	0.00	0.00	12.00	12.00
67	Form Systems Corp	12.00	+0.00	10	10	0.00	0.00	12.00	12.00	12.00	0.00	10	10	0.00	0.00	12.00	12.00
68	Form Systems Corp	12.00	+0.00	10	10	0.00	0.00	12.00	12.00	12.00	0.00	10	10	0.00	0.00	12.00	12.00
69	Form Systems Corp	12.00	+0.00	10	10	0.00	0.00	12.00	12.00	12.00	0.00	10	10	0.00	0.00	12.00	12.00
70	Form Systems Corp	12.00	+0.00	10	10	0.00	0.00	12.00	12.00	12.00	0.00	10	10	0.00	0.00	12.00	12.00
71	Form Systems Corp	12.00	+0.00	10	10	0.00	0.00	12.00	12.00	12.00	0.00	10	10	0.00	0.00	12.00	12.00
72	Form Systems Corp	12.00	+0.00	10	10	0.00	0.00	12.00	12.00	12.00	0.00	10	10	0.00	0.00	12.00	12.00
73	Form Systems Corp	12.00	+0.00	10	10	0.00	0.00	12.00	12.00	12.00	0.00	10	10	0.00	0.00	12.00	12.00
74	Form Systems Corp																

	Price	Chg	%	Vol	Open
15 Sprint	14825	+350	0.8	234	14720
16 Sprint	14115	-45	-0.3	21	14180
17 Sprint Int	17375	+125	0.4	33	17200
18 SBA Group	2174	0.0	0.0	27	2173
19 SBA Group	435	0.0	0.0	27	435
20 SBA Group	413	0.0	0.0	27	413
21 SBA Group	3123	+0.5	0.0	283	3122
22 SBA Group	1688	+0.0	0.0	127	1688
23 SBA Group	120	+0.0	0.0	112	120
24 SBA Group	1470	0.0	0.0	14	1470
25 SBA Group	3250	0.5	0.2	0	3250
26 SBA Group	5310	-15	-0.3	23	5325
27 SBA Group	1745	+2.0	0.1	37	1743
28 SBA Group	575	0.0	0.0	147	575
29 SBA Group	5725	0.0	0.0	12	5725
30 SBA Group	2010	0.0	0.0	15	2010
31 SBA Group	4810	+0.5	0.0	15	4810
32 SBA Group	180	+0.5	0.3	12	179
33 SBA Group	4584	+25	0.5	116	4559
34 SBA Group	7125	+0.5	0.0	128	7124
COMMUNICATIONS					
35 AT	1000	+0.5	0.0	12	1000
36 AT	1745	0.5	0.0	14	1745
37 AT	7478	-0.5	-0.0	0	7478
38 AT	1315	-0.5	-0.0	0	1315
39 AT	1805	-0.5	-0.0	0	1805
40 AT	5008	-0.5	-0.0	0	5008
41 AT	5778	-0.5	-0.0	0	5778
42 AT	2850	0.0	0.0	0	2850
43 AT	11748	-0.5	-0.0	0	11748
AGG					
44 AT	6885	+78.0	1.4	121	6885
45 AT	3520	+0.5	0.0	110	3520
46 AT	550	0.0	0.0	112	550
EXPORT					
47 AT	315	0.0	0.0	0	315
48 AT	2010	0.0	0.0	0	2010
49 AT	3520	+7.5	0.2	117	3520
50 AT	3275	-0.5	-0.0	0	3275
51 AT	2450	+185.0	7.6	123	2450
52 AT	8400	-17.0	-0.2	84	8400
53 AT	8455	0.0	0.0	12	8455
54 AT	1410	0.0	0.0	12	1410
55 AT	7000	0.0	0.0	13	7000
56 AT	2295	0.0	0.0	214	2295
57 AT	2600	0.0	0.0	24	2600
58 AT	10500	0.0	0.0	19	10500
59 AT	1000	-0.5	-0.0	0	1000
60 AT	3795	-5.5	-0.1	214	3795
61 AT	945	+2.0	0.2	48	945
62 AT	1035	0.0	0.0	110	1035
63 AT	8075	-0.5	-0.0	14	8075
64 AT	1450	0.0	0.0	36	1450
65 AT	545	+0.5	0.1	85	545
66 AT	650	+14.0	2.2	144	650
67 AT	2925	0.0	0.0	0	2925
68 AT	11800	+2.5	0.0	12	11800
69 AT	1440	0.0	0.0	35	1440
70 AT	1900	0.0	0.0	19	1900
71 AT	931	0.0	0.0	0	931
72 AT	800	0.0	0.0	0	800
73 AT	8075	-0.5	-0.0	112	8075
74 AT	18000	-27.0	-0.1	82	18000
75 AT	630	0.0	0.0	41	630
76 AT	2280	0.0	0.0	218	2280
77 AT	2000	0.0	0.0	218	2000
78 AT	3415	0.0	0.0	0	3415
79 AT	11425	0.0	0.0	101	11425
80 AT	1400	0.0	0.0	140	1400
81 AT	350	0.0	0.0	130	350
AGG					
82 AT	7295	0.5	0.0	175	7295
83 AT	3000	0.0	0.0	33	3000
84 AT	4800	0.0	0.0</		

price divided by last year's earnings per share. Other details: Ex. date: 1/1/98.

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Takeover talk sets Asda's tills ringing

A NEAR hysterical rush into Asda sent the shares of the nation's third-largest supermarket chain soaring 17.25p to 176.5p. By Asda standards it was an incredible jump: on a good day the shares move 5p.

Wal-Mart, the big US retailer, thought to be stalking a British retailer, was largely responsible for the excitement. Kingfisher was also in the frame. But independent research suggesting the group is winning market share and a series of meetings with analysts also contributed to the upsurge.

According to Seag, turnover nudged 39 million shares with three-quarters of the business conducted through the old-fashioned market-making system.

The pattern of the Asda share turnover suggested it was speculative interest that dominated the buying. Wal-Mart, which has already moved into Germany, has made no secret of its desire to expand elsewhere in Europe. The stock market is convinced it will not be long before

SPORTS INTERNET has confirmed what the market suspected - its first takeover is near. The group said yesterday it is in talks to buy a leading Internet sports and gaming group. The shares arrived last month at 55p; they rose 25p to 162.5p - a peak. Behind the company is former City analyst Chris Akers. He created the business to take advantage of takeover opportunities among the fledgling Internet companies.

it descends on a British operation. Asda, because of the shape and size of its retail spread, is seen in many quarters as an ideal acquisition for the Americans. Rumours have swirled about a deal but Asda has in the past denied any talks were going on. Kingfisher could also contemplate an Asda strike.

Archie Norman, the Asda chief, is a former Kingfisher finance director and it is known the two retailers have held exploratory talks. Kingfisher appears to have reacquired its taste for food and is testing the hyper-market concept. Asda is not the only group seen as a potential Wal-Mart target. In recent months Safeway, MFI and Booker, the cash-and-carry chain, have been the subjects of intense speculation.

The independent AGB survey showed Asda was outperforming its supermarket rivals. The analyst meetings, which appeared to underline the AGB encouragement, are being held before the chain goes into its close season ahead of results. Asda shares were at one time up 18.25p; they peaked at 214p last summer and, with talk of price wars and Government probes undermining supermarket sentiment, fell to 140p last month.

The rest of the market replicated Wednesday's display.

MARKET REPORT



DEREK PAIN

Blue chips suffered a modest reverse but the mid-cap, and to a lesser extent, the small-cap indices moved ahead. Footsie fell 27.5 points to 6,466.1; the mid-cap jumped 89.8 to 5,707.3 and the small-cap rose 5.2 to 2,449.1. It was another squeeze session with expectations of corporate activity providing much of the action.

But Eilifson and Rio Tinto owed their strength to the overnight advance of commodity shares on Wall Street, where investors took the view the recovering world economy will trigger fresh demand. Eilifson gained 18p to 187.5p and Rio 92.5p to 1,004p. Imperial Chemical Industries duly clinched its £1.7bn sale to the US Huntsman group and rose 23.5p to 659p; at one time the shares were down 25.5p.

BT firmed 9p to 1,084p on Goldman Sachs support and Thames Water rose 27.5p to 915.5p with Credit Lyonnais offering support. Investor Henderson Crosthwaite put J Sainsbury, trading statement today on its sell list and Teather & Greenwood moved Sentia, the drugs group, from buy to sell. Sainsbury firmed 5.5p to 375p and Scotia, ending development of a cancer drug, fell 13p to 126p.

On the takeover front Alexander Russell, the aggregates group, tumbled 25p to 112.5p after calling off talks with RMC, up 53p to 918p.

CA Coutts held at 165p; after the market closed it was announced that the company's independent director, Henry Cubbon, had rejected a 160p management buy-out and the bid had been dropped.

Polypipe firmed 9.5p higher to 202p as IML, up 27p to 299p, produced a 200p cash offer. Hinn, the computer consultancy group, rose 26p to 120p, as a takeover approach, presumably from interests related to former chairman Wayne Channon, was signalled. Mr Channon and friends have been stake building VDC, distributing products

to vets, gained 30p to 175p after a 190p bid was indicated.

Fife, an ironmongery group now largely a cash shell, rose 5.5p to 66.5p with disco chain Northern Leisure displaying predatory intentions. Any deal would, in effect, be a cash raising exercise by the dancing group.

Lusmo gashed 19.25p to 139.75p, seemingly on institutional interest, although some wondered about corporate action. Rank, up 21.75p to 271.25p and, yet again, Pilkington, up to 84.5p, were drawn into takeover speculation.

The mid-cap index's progress was in part due to a recovery by engineering and packaging and paper shares. Glywedd improved 18p to 219p, Premier Farnell 17.5p to 245p and Rexham 16.5p to 234p. The improving housing market helped MFI, the furniture chain, achieve a 7p gain to 49.5p.

Recent high flyers, such as Dixons, down 8p to 1,387p, were at a low ebb, and Astra Zeneca's headcave continued with a 76p fall to 2,650p. The

NORTHERN PETROLEUM, an oil group which has collapsed from nearly 60p to 2.5p, doubled to 5p as a rescuer materialised. Bruce Rowan, a shareholder, is pumping £100,000 into the group in exchange for shares and hoping to arrange further finance. His holding will remain below 29.9 per cent. Derek McGroove, ex-RioTinto, becomes managing director, and oil analyst David Roberts has joined the board. Ellis & Partners become stockbrokers.

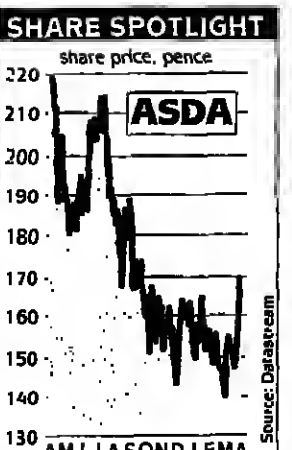
shares have yet to score a solitary gain since the Anglo-Swedish merger was completed last week.

Other drug groups were under the weather with Morgan Stanley said to be making cautious noises. Glaxo Wellcome fell 113p to 1,885p. Waste Recycling fell 17.5p to 459p despite bullish noises from BT Alex Brown. It said: "We continue to expect the stock to outperform on a longer term view, given the group's well-above-average forecast growth profile."

Food group John Lusty firmed 1p to 5.5p on director buying, and Intelligent Environment jumped 30.5p to 105p after an investment meeting. London Pacific's high-flying display took it a shade too close to the sun and the shares fell 75p to 432.5p. Their giddy display lifted the price 280p in two days as the market grew excited about its US Internet associations. In November the shares were down to 155p.

On Oxfam's Collector, an Internet auction and antiques business which has moved ahead strongly, fell 70p to 310p. A company related to French tycoon Bernard Arnault, who runs LVMH, has taken a 20 per cent interest at 238p a share.

SEAQ VOLUME: 1.3 billion
SEAQ TRADES: 93,567
GILTS INDEX: 111.03 -3.07



Booker's banks agree £700m refinancing

By NIGEL COPE
Associate City Editor

BOOKER, the struggling cash-and-carry chain, attempted to draw a line under its past problems yesterday with a £700m refinancing programme with its banks.

The new facility, struck with a syndicate of 21 banks, lasts until December 2001 and gives Booker a breathing space during which it can attempt to pay down its huge debt burden, which reached £442m at Booker's December year end and has risen to more than £500m since then.

Stuart Rose, the former Argos chief executive who took the reins at Booker last year, said: "The refinancing is a key step for us. It gives us the space to press ahead with our disposal programme, which will leave us with our core cash-and-carry operation which is a good, undervalued asset. This business is not knackered."

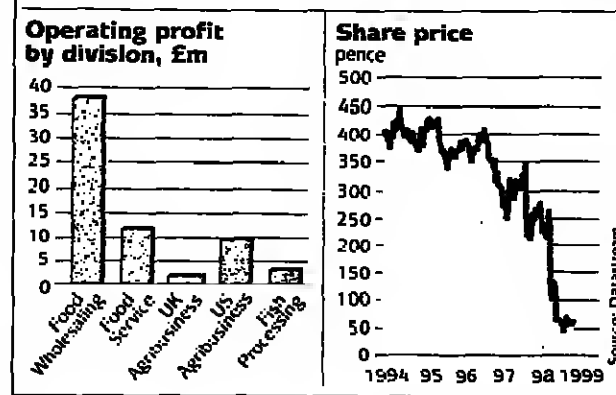
Mr Rose said talks were progressing to sell his food service business, which is worth over £100m. Discussions are also continuing on the sale of the Arbor Acres chicken business and the Harvest McConnell fish processing division.

The announcement came as Booker unveiled a grim set of full-year figures showing that the group had slumped to a £71m loss in the full year to December after £4m of exceptional charges. These included losses on disposals, charges related to the over-

BOOKER: AT A GLANCE

Market value: £159m, share price 64p (1p)

Five-year record	1994	1995	1996	1997	1998
Turnover (£bn)	3.7	4.2	4.4	5.2	5.1
Pre-tax profits (£m)	69.8	82.8	13.0	7.4	(71.7)
Earnings per share (p)	21.2	22.8	(4.7)	19.7	(39.0)
Dividends per share (p)	22.4	23.1	23.8	24.0	-



spend on the Heartland distribution project and £13m of rationalisation costs. Stripping out exceptional charges, trading profits also fell from £76m to £22m. The company said it expected to incur a further £50m of charges in the current year. These relate to losses on the £4m disposal of its Booker Wholesale Foods operation and a further £20m to "sort out" its cash-and-carry operations. Further job losses, in addition to the 900 announced in November, are not ruled out.

Mr Rose is confident he can rescue Booker but it is likely to be a long and frustrating journey for shareholders. They have seen the share price slump from almost 300p last summer to just 64p at yesterday's close as a series of profits warnings took their toll, and first Somerset and then Budgens walked away from merger talks. To add insult to injury, the dividend has been scrapped for the foreseeable future.

The road back to respectability depends on how much Mr Rose can make the expensively developed but chronically underutilised Booker assets sweat.

Booker plans to concentrate on its core chain of 178 cash-and-carry depots, but more product needs to be pushed through



Stuart Rose: 'This business is not knackered'

the system. Too many of its lorries are travelling half empty and its outlets stock too narrow a range of goods. Mr Rose wants to expand more into higher margin chilled foods, ethnic foods, meat and fresh fruit.

It is going to be a punishing task for the management, and Mr Rose recognises that rather than chase sales growth, the key to prosperity lies in increasing profit margins. Its cash-and-carry business made £38m of profits on sales of £3.7bn last year, a margin of 1 per cent compared to the 2.6 per cent and 3.5 per cent achieved by smaller rivals Bateys and Bestway respectively.

With the shares at these levels there may not be much downside left. If Mr Rose fails perhaps a hidden - Wal-Mart? - will come to the shareholders' rescue. Few analysts are brave enough to offer current-year profit forecasts but investors who have stayed the course so far should not bail out now.

Caverdale completes transformation

By CLIFFORD GERMAN

THE EIGHTYEAR transformation of Caverdale from a loss-making motor dealer into a specialist retailer and distributor of clothing and accessories to fast-growing niche markets, including motor-cycling, sailing, cycling and fitness centres, is complete.

This follows the disposal of both the former Godfrey Davis motor dealerships in 1997 and the industrial products division last July, and the acquisition of two leisure marine companies in January this year. It has been a tumultuous ride. Last year turnover

plunged from £251m to £71m and operating profits from £7.1m to £4.7m. However, the ongoing and acquired businesses grew their sales by 60 per cent and profits quadrupled to £3.6m. After paying interest costs, profit before tax rose by 40 per cent to £5.04m, including disposal profits of £2.3m.

Including special dividends, shareholders have received back more than they subscribed in rights issues and capital calls. Arild Nerdrum, the executive chairman, said yesterday: "The group has four significant institutional shareholders with 14 per cent of the shares, and the directors own a further 26 per cent. Capital expenditure is likely to fall from last year's £10m to less than £2m if there are no further acquisitions."

The three ongoing divisions now contribute shares of roughly 50:35:15 to profits. Over time the proportions are expected to even out, but all operate in relatively fragmented markets with scope to expand by acquisitions and organic growth.

All three divisions are targeted at what Mr Nerdrum calls "passion" products - low interest rates are encouraging consumers to spend. The latest figures are in line with market forecasts. Ed Wright at broker Dresner Kleinwort Benson is not changing his forecast of £5.2m and earnings of 11.9p in the current year, rising to £7.4m and 16.6p in 2000.

But the shares have underperformed the market in the past 12 months and even after a jump of 11.5p to 124p yesterday still look attractive, at less than eight times forward earnings.

Bernie flags off two-course race

BERNIE ECCLESTONE, head of Formula One, has managed to get Nicola Foulston of Brands Hatch and the owners of the rival Silverstone racing circuit to compete for the right to hold the British Grand Prix. The BRDC owns Silverstone and has the contract with Mr Ecclestone to host the British Grand Prix until 2001. The BRDC recently tabled a restructuring plan to its 800-plus members, outlining how it would commercialise the historic Silverstone racetrack.

The BRDC is keen to keep Silverstone out of the grip of Ms Foulston. She hasn't tabled an official bid yet, but yesterday she published a two-page open letter to members of the BRDC in a car magazine. She said she accepted the BRDC's proposals for restructuring, but she still wants to buy Silverstone.

She has said previously that Mr Ecclestone has agreed to give her the British Grand Prix for 10 years if she wins Silverstone. The BRDC fears this is just Mr Ecclestone pitting the two against each other in order to bid up the price of the grand prix. You can see why Mr Ecclestone got where he is today...

PEOPLE AND BUSINESS

BY JOHN WILLCOCK



Mr Ecclestone has agreed to give her the British Grand Prix for 10 years if she wins Silverstone. The BRDC fears this is just Mr Ecclestone pitting the two against each other in order to bid up the price of the grand prix. You can see why Mr Ecclestone got where he is today...

In the bag...

TETLEY GROUP, the world's second-biggest tea-bag company, yesterday made its second top management change in a month, appointing Stuart Wallis as non-executive chairman.

Mr Wallis is a heavyweight City figure. He chairs Seton School Healthcare and John Mansfield Group, and he used to head Octopus Publishing.

Bowater and Fisons, Tetley sources hope his arrival signals that the tea-bag group no longer considers itself an acquisition target, following last summer's pulled floss.

Last month Leon Allan, chairman and chief executive, and Roger Price, finance director, stepped aside in favour of internal candidates Kenneth Pringle and Peter Undsworth respectively.

Taking control

SIR ROY MCNULTY, chairman of Shorts Brothers, the Belfast aerospace company, was yesterday named chairman of National Air Traffic Services (NATS) by Deputy Prime Minister John Prescott.

Last year the Government said it wanted to sell or float 51 per cent of the service, which runs air-traffic control centres at Prestwick in Scotland and Swanwick, near Southampton. The latter will not be fully up and running for several years, so any privatisation concerning NATS is some way off.

Which is just as well, as Mr Prescott has still to persuade several Labour backbenchers and recalcitrant trade unionists that part-privatising air-traffic control is a good idea.

Sir Roy will receive a salary of £100,000 for working four days a week, and his term of office at NATS is two-and-a-half years from 1 May 1999. He replaces Sir Malcolm Field, chairman of the Civil Aviation Authority.

Stoddart's day

MICHAEL STODDART, chairman of Electra, could be excused for being a little tense yesterday as he presented the case against 3's hostile bid for the investment trust.

Mr Stoddart said it was his

Wembley discusses stadium complex rebuild

By PETER TRAL LARSEN

WEMBLEY, the leisure group that last month sold Wembley Stadium to the Football Association so it can be rebuilt, has held talks with property groups about redeveloping the complex around the stadium.

"When you build a new stadium it always acts like a magnet," Nigel Potter, Wembley's chief executive, said yesterday. "We have had some discussions with property companies about the possibilities for the site."

Although Wembley no longer owns the famous twin towers, it still controls much of the land around the stadium as well as the Wembley Arena and conference centre. Analysts believe Wembley is likely to form a joint venture with a property developer to redevelop the site, which could attract retailers and other leisure operators.

"When you are sitting on 40 acres of land in that location you are in a good position to negotiate with developers," said Peter Joseph, an analyst with stockbrokers Peel Hunt.

The news emerged as Wembley reported a three-fold jump in pre-tax profits for the year to last December to £35.2m, boosted by an £8.4m gain as a result of property revaluations. Underlying pre-tax profits rose by 8 per cent to £26.8m.

Claes Hultman, the chairman, said the company was planning to return "a substantial proportion" of the proceeds of the stadium sale to shareholders. It is looking to minimise the tax liabilities for shareholders and expects to make an announcement in the next few months. Wembley received £105m from the sale.

After paying tax and settling a liability in the US, the group will be left with about £60m. However, Mr Potter said the group had decided against a large acquisition.

According to analysts, the stadium sale has highlighted Wembley's value. Mr Joseph calculates that the group's assets and businesses have a combined value of about £250m - equivalent to 44p a share. Yesterday, Wembley shares rose 10p to 340.5p.

38th wedding anniversary. He said he was "aware of the clash but could do nothing about it." This may not have meant any great discord in the Stoddart household. Mr Stoddart added that he "always remembered [the date] but his wife didn't".

Kinkel in business

GERMANY'S former foreign minister, Klaus Kinkel, has popped up as an adviser to Deutsche Telekom, the recently privatised phone giant. The group says Mr Kinkel's "foreign policy expertise will be available to Ron Sommer, Deutsche's chief executive." Some Germans wonder whether Mr Kinkel has been hired for other reasons as well. He was, after all, Germany's secret service before becoming Helmut Kohl's foreign minister.

Mr Kohl himself has bounced back from electoral defeat by becoming a member of the advisory board of Credit Suisse.

E-mail: j.willcock@independent.co.uk

FOREIGN EXCHANGE RATES

Country	Starting	1 month	3 months	6 months	1 year
UK	1.0000	2.5275	2.5268	0.6216	0.6218
Australia	2.5182	2.5268	2.5268	0.6216	0.6218
Austria	20.654	20.642	20.652	12.838	12.830
Belgium	60.548	60.412	60.152	37.856	37.617
Canada	2.3979	2.3967	2.3940	1.4895	1.4891
Denmark	11.153	11.133	11.094	6.9328	6.9307
Euro	1.9316	1.9304	1.9287	1.0000	1.0000
Finland	8.9249	8.9227	8.9154	5.5365	5.5148
France	9.849	9.827	9.785	6.1219	6.1103
Germany	2.9358	2.9292	2.9166	1.8248	1.8214
Greece	487.02	486.62	481.64	309.82	309.87
Hong Kong	12.467	12.463	12.468	7.7491	7.7496
Ireland	1.1821	1.1794	1.1744	0.7348	0.7348
Italy	290.72	289.72	288.80	18.88	18.40
Japan	161.73	161.73	161.73	3.9000	3.8830
Malaysia	6.1134	6.2448	6.4466	9.5300	10.2100
Mexico	13.332	3.3013	3.2872	2.0528	2.0448
Netherlands	3.3687	3.3687	3.3687	1.8546	1.8550
New Zealand	2.9834	2.9834	2.9834	7.7625	7.7772
Norway	12.467	12.464	12.503	7.7492	7.7772
Portugal	350.21	350.21	350.21	18.88	18.40
Saudi Arabia	6.0932	6.0932	6.0932	3.7502	3.7579
Singapore	2.7232	2.7232	2.7232	1.8927	1.8973
South Africa	9.8097	9.8097	9.8097	1.1213	1.1213
Spain	161.73	161.73	161.73	3.9000	3.8830
Sweden	13.339	13.313	13.261	8.2910	8.2491
Switzerland	2.4920	2.4902	2.4834	1.5974	1.5974
US	1.6088	1.6088	1.6088	1.4924	1.4825

OTHER SPOT RATES

Country	Starting	1 month	3 months	6 months	1 year
Argentina	1.6008	0.9950	0.9950	0.6113	0.3800
Brazil	2.6827	1.6675	1.6675	81.244	50.500
China	13.319	8.2789	8.2789	61.382	38.160
Czech Rep	56.71	35.257	35.257	6.4070	3.9825
Egypt	5.6419	3.3950	3.3950	8.5552	3.3695
Ghana	3913.8	2632.8	2632.8	41507.0	25800.0
India	48.641	42.790	42.790	1954.7	1215.00
Hungary	379.54	32.82	32.82	52.930	32.900
Indonesia	1398.3	8670.0	8670.0	60.250	37.450
Kuwait	0.4904	0.3049	0.3049	61.631	30800.0
Nigeria	139.89	86.950	86.950	5.9063	3.6725

INTEREST RATES

UK	5.25%	Discount	5.00%	Repo/Ave	2.90%
European Central Bank	Discount	2.75%	Discount	0.50%	
O/N Marginal 1.50%	Discount	7.75%	Discount	0.50%	
O/N Facility 1.50%	Discount	4.50%	Discount	2.88%	
Canada	2.50%	Discount	4.88%	Discount	2.88%
Prime	6.50%	Discount	4.88%	Discount	2.88%

BOND YIELDS

	Dollar		1d	3m	6m	1y	2y	3y	5y	10y
Q.3800		Treasury Bills					5.14	5.04		
0.5000		LIBOR			5.32	5.32	5.36	5.36	5.36	5.36
38.160		Domestic Depos	5.00	5.50	5.19	5.31	5.31	5.25	5.25	5.25
3.9825		Eurosterling Deps	5.19	5.31	5.19	5.31	5.25	5.31	5.31	5.31
3.6395		Eligible Bank Bills					5.18	5.11		
25900.0		Sterling CDs					5.27	5.21	5.21	5.21
1215.00		Eurocollar CDs					5.43			
32.900		Euro Libor			2.62	2.62	2.62	2.62	2.62	2.62
37.450										
380800										
3.6725										

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SPORT

Olympic Games: Fantastic Four show benefits of high-tech facilities as golden hopes of the future flourish in Florida

Britain counts on magic of Disney

By NICK HARRIS
in Orlando

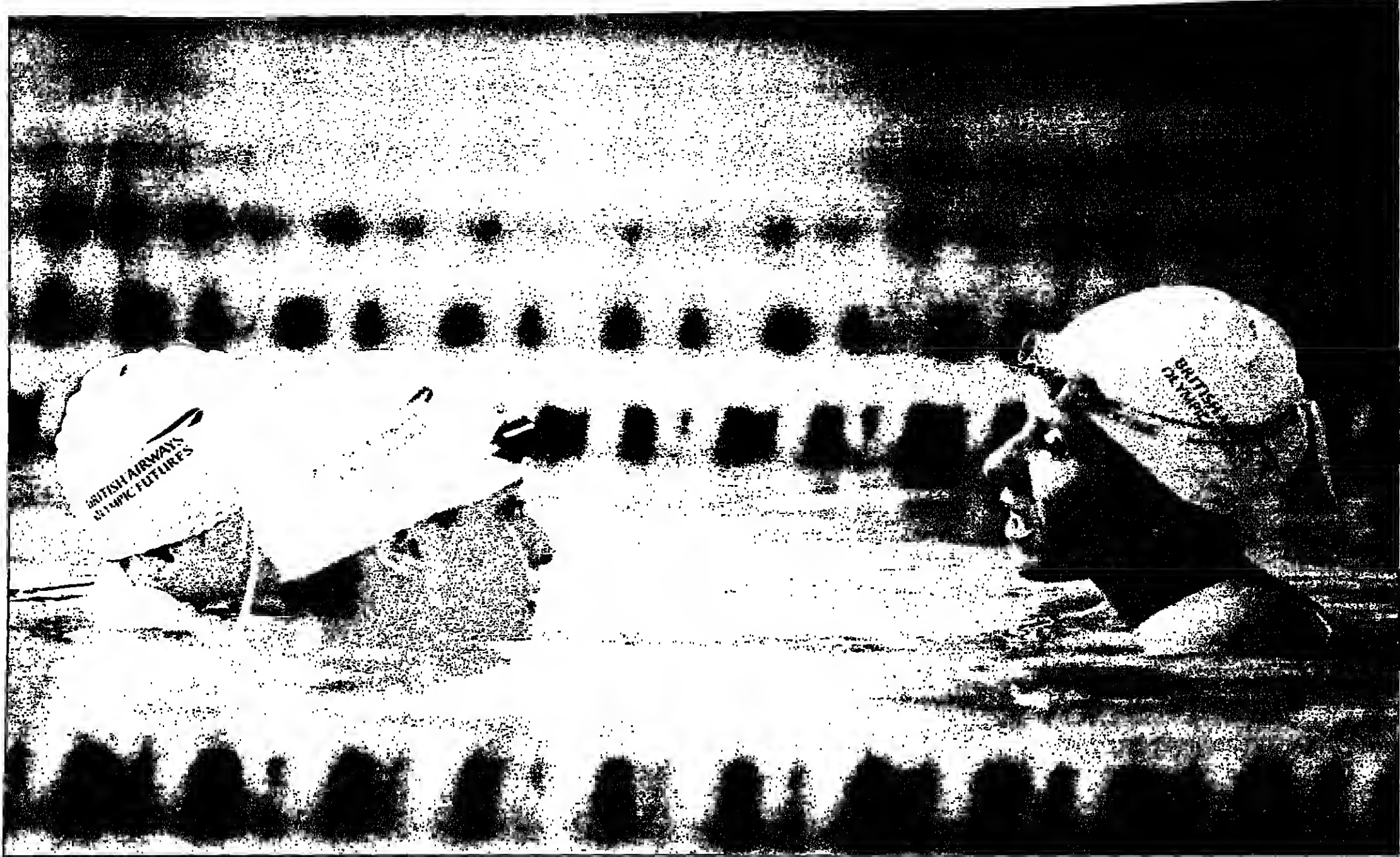
IF THE Fantastic Four sound like Disney characters, then it is partly because they are. Their names will not be familiar (yet), but attending a warm-weather training camp in Florida could change all that.

Mark Lewis-Francis, aged 16, is the fastest man in the world of his age over 100 metres. Nathan Palmer, also 16, is already breaking records set by Britain's No 1 hurdler, Colin Jackson. The self-styled Four – they each don a single blue glove to signal their allegiance to self-belief – are completed by Tim Benjamin, (a prospect over 200m) and Aaron Evans (400m), and were just a quartet among 110 of the country's brightest young sporting hopes to spend 10 days at the British Airways Olympic Futures camp in Orlando.

The young sportsmen and women, ranging from 12 to 18 and representing the cream of British athletics, swimming, cycling, judo, gymnastics, basketball and badminton, were put through their paces in an environment that British sporting heroes of the past could only have dreamed about. "I wish this type of project had been available when I was 13 or 14. It would've made such a difference," Sharron Davies, the Olympic medal-winner and "camp mother" to this next generation of hopefuls, said during a break in her motivational duties in Florida last month.

"The kids at the camp learn that their problems are the same as everyone else's, whether it's their schoolwork or training or money problems," she added of one benefit of bringing together such a group. Another benefit, Davies added, was that by being nurtured in a professional environment, the chances of burn-out and disillusionment could be diminished. Of her own Olympic triumph – winning silver in the 400m individual medley at the 1980 Games – she added: "When I looked at the board in Moscow all I thought was not 'I've won a silver medal' but 'great, now I can give up!'."

Experiences such as Davies', the British Olympic Association hopes, may now become a thing of the past, and the first fruits of the camp could come as soon as July, when a number of those attending will form the backbone of the Great Britain team being sent to the European Youth Olympic Days (the youth Olympics) in Esbjerg in Denmark. Steve Backley and Dwan Chambers used past EYOD successes as springboards to greater things, and the BOA hopes that those competing this summer



Sharron Davies (right) gives Victoria Cook (left) and James Goddard the benefit of her experience as an Olympic medalist in the pool at the British training camp in Orlando

Allsport

will make similar progress, if not in time for next year's Sydney Olympics, then in time for Athens in 2004.

The aims of the three BAOF camps – the first took place for winter sports athletes last year at Crystal Palace and the third will take place ahead of next year's Millennial Games – are simple: to give young British sportsmen and women access to multi-sports facilities and give them a taste of what it might be like to compete in major events. While that might sound a modest ambition, it is actually a minor revolution. None of the 110 youngsters

had ever trained at a warm-weather camp prior to travelling to Orlando, and none had experienced anything close to the range of facilities they found when they got there. "For many of them, it's the first time they've been in a multi-sport environment. It's important they get used to being in camp situations," Mark Howell of the BOA, said. "The fact is that if BA [putting £350,000 into the project] weren't sponsoring it, it wouldn't be happening. That's something that needs to be addressed by the government."

For a nation that supposedly

cherishes its sporting idols, Britain is some way behind its competitors in providing the necessary facilities to achieve its goals. If nothing else, the tally of just 49 British Olympic post-war gold medals (the US has won well over 500, more than twice as many per head) speaks volumes. Most of the swimmers who attended the Orlando camp train in 25-metre pools at home (there are only a handful of 50-metre pools in the country) and have to get up well before 6am for the privilege. The gymnasts often train in halls that bear no resemblance to competition

surroundings. The cyclists and track and field athletes have to suffer the inclement British climate, and few of the 110 who went to Orlando are able to train as often as they would like because travelling every day to appropriate facilities is impractical. The main training centre at the Disney Wide World of Sport (which the senior Olympic squad uses regularly), has a first-class track, an enormous complex of gyms and weights rooms, its own baseball stadium and a velodrome (bought wholesale from the Atlanta Olympics), not to mention a 50-

metre swimming pool and specialist medical facilities a stone's throw away, and fine weather. For the duration of the camp, the BOA also provided the participants with workshops on nutrition, sports psychology, physiology, career development and working with the media. Whether all this will actually pay dividends remains to be seen, but the coaching staff at the camp are adamant that it can do nothing but good. "These youngsters need to realise how good they are," Brian Hall, the athletics team director, said. "It's hard to make them realise

that they're the best young athletes in Britain and that they are the future," he added, and said that by treating them as such was one way to help realise their potential. In Tokyo in 1964, before Disney had even laid a foundation brick in Florida, Britain had a fantastic four gold medalists in Lynn Davies and Mary Rand (both long jump), Ann Packer (800m) and Ken Matthews (200m walk). Perhaps, when we realise that investing in our sporting future is no Mickey Mouse endeavour, future Games will see similar rewards and better.

SIX YOUNG MEDAL HUNTERS TO FOLLOW ON THE ROAD FROM ORLANDO



MOHAMMED FARAH
16-year-old athlete
3000m and cross-country

"The most exciting endurance talent we've had for a long time," said Brian Hall, the British athletics team manager, of Farah, who came to Britain from Somalia five years ago and is in the process of obtaining a British passport. "When I started running aged 11, I couldn't speak English well," Farah said. "Because I couldn't understand the directions during cross country races, I didn't know where to go and just followed the people in front." He learnt English (and the way) and now regularly wipes the floor with the opposition by over a minute. His hero is Haile Gebrselassie. "I like the way he runs. I'd like to do that. It would mean a great deal to run for Britain."



MARK LEWIS-FRANCIS
16-year-old athlete
100m

"The camp is going to help me a lot," Lewis-Francis, founder of the Fantastic Four, said. "Here, you're out training all week, every day, where at home I'd normally only train twice a week. You can spend a lot more time on it, not trying to get everything into the two sessions. I've learnt to take my time." He has recorded 10.49sec in his event and may have a chance of a relay place in the Sydney Olympics. "My starts need to be worked on, and I also run bending forward too much and I need to straighten up." Of the blue glove he and three team-mates wear in races, he said: "We're all going to wear it when we go home and take it forward with us."



NATHAN PALMER
16-year-old athlete
110m hurdles

Hoping to follow in Colin Jackson's footsteps, Palmer has already broken the 110m hurdles record that Britain's No 1 recorded at his age. Jackson did a time of 13.19sec, while Palmer has registered 12.96sec. A talented all-round sportsman, Palmer played rugby for Wales Under-16s and football at the Cardiff City school of excellence before deciding to concentrate on athletics. "The athletics was more a challenge. I got more out of it," he said. Like Mark Lewis-Francis, he's a member of the self-styled Fantastic Four, and, perhaps with an eye on the commercial future, always sports his Nike-logoed blue glove.



SALLY RUSBATCH
14-year-old swimmer
100m and 200m backstroke
national champion

"The camp has made me feel very professional," Rusbatch said. "We've had to keep a log book of swims, including heart-rate intensities, and how we feel after each swim." The 7am-9am and 1.30pm-3.30pm training sessions in Orlando offered the chance of a break from 5.15am starts and late-night finishes. "Managing school and sport is difficult. Sharron Davies gave us some valuable information. She said you can always go back to your education but you can't go back to your sport. She's been really friendly. I didn't think she'd be like that. I thought she'd be more professional [and aloof]."



REBECCA MASON
12-year-old gymnast
National Under-14 champion

"The gymnasiums here have more of a competition layout," said the Cheshire gymnast of the Orlando facilities. "And it's a lot warmer than at home." Becky, regarded as the brightest prospect in British gymnastics – started her sport at five but will have to wait until 2004 for a chance of competing in the Olympics. The minimum age in senior competition is now 16. With more muscle definition and power in her 4ft-something frame than most people will ever have, her favourite (and best) discipline is the asymmetric bars and her next target is the European Youth Olympic Days in Denmark in July.



STUART HOLDER
16-year-old badminton player
National Under-17
singles/doubles champion

"At home I've got a scholarship at a posh club, the Solihull racquets and health club," said Holder, who saw huge benefits in the BAOF camp. "Because all of us [the British badminton team] live in different areas of the country at home, it's hard to get together often, so the camp's good. So is the access to the physios and the other things like the workshops on psychology." He added that it had also been eye-opening to meet competitors from other events, even though some are sceptical of the merits of his sport. "They come up and say: 'Badminton? You just hit it over the net don't you?'"

Giggs plucky, not 'lucky'

Sir: While acknowledging the brilliance of the Ryan Giggs goal in the FA Cup semi-final replay on Wednesday night many of the TV pundits, and some sports journalists, referred to a "lucky bobble".

In scoring the goal Giggs beat Vieira, Dixon, Keown, Dixon (again), and Adams. The first player to touch the ball, after Giggs got hold of it in his own half, was David Seaman, when he picked it from the back of the Arsenal net.

"Bobbie" or not, to refer to anything about the goal as being "lucky" does a great injustice to Ryan Giggs, given that, in extra-time with his side down to 10 men, he ran clean through the best defence in England and scored to put Manchester United through to the FA Cup final.

As to whether it was the greatest goal ever, this is, of course, a matter of debate. It will certainly be a goal, and a match that will live long in the memory. DANIEL HAYNES
Forest Hill, London

Same old story

Sir: Why are football managers so transparent? When a referee makes an error, their reactions are completely predictable. "He's cost us the game! I couldn't believe that decision! I'd better not say any more."

Referees are not perfect, never have been, never will be. But they're the best means we have of enforcing the rules and

controlling hugely overpaid players. Referee Paul Durkin admitted this week that he missed a hand ball in the FA Cup semi-final between Newcastle and Tottenham for which he was roundly criticised. I'll have more sympathy with his critics when they tell their pampered players to stop trying to con officials and get fellow professionals sent off. GEORGE MITCHELL,
Apsley, Herts

Red intent

Sir: I cannot understand why there is a debate about the sending-off of Southampton's Claus Lundekvam at Villa Park last Saturday. The fact that the

linesman had flagged for another infringement was completely unknown to Lundekvam who went in with intent to commit a foul and the intent is what counts, not whether the ball is still live or not.

If a player kicks another in the penalty area while waiting for a corner or free-kick to be taken, the award is still a penalty and probably a red card – you don't say "oh, no problem mate, the ball is out of play at the moment – hit him again, why don't you?"

Lundekvam sought to break the laws, had no chance of getting the ball and, regardless of the state of play, deserved his punishment. NIGEL CUBBAGE
Marleygate, Herts

Welsh wails

Sir: I look forward, optimistically, to Alan Watkins' Rugby column each week. However, my confidence is invariably misplaced as each time the bias with which the article is delivered leaves me feeling that this particular scribe should be consigned to the Pontypriid edition of your splendid newspaper! When will the wider view be expressed? Why no mention of Scotland's marvellous revival and awe-inspiring performance against the French? (Wales find redemption at church of Wembley, 13 April)

Also, what of the decline of our Gallic cousins? Mr Watkins' views

on his countrymen are welcome, but remember, a balanced perspective will always be more absorbing than blatant partiality. IAN MACKINNON
London

Open to debate

Sir: As the Five Nations' Championship moves into a new era, I would like to recommend some changes to the rules. For as long as I can remember, there has been concern over the paucity of open play and the predominance of kicking.

The last 10 or 15 years have seen the IRB tinker with the rules – changing the value of the try, the introduction of the

indirect free kick, the acceptance of lifting in the line out, etc. However, it is still too easy for a team to win without scoring a try.

My proposed changes are:
● Replace the line-out with a throw-in into open play (it is almost impossible to lose your own throw-in, so this would get the ball into play much quicker).
● Tries should remain worth five points. A yellow and/or red card should be shown to the offender.

All other infringements should be punished by indirect free-kicks, which would have to be run, rather than kicked. After all, rugby is all about running with the ball, rather than kicking. ANDREW BOWDLER
Working in Nepal with the International Nepal Fellowship

THE INDEPENDENT
Friday 16 April 1999

Applause
greeted
Bradley
on course

THE INDEPENDENT
Friday 16 April 1999

The legend of 'Evans'

The darts world is lamenting the loss of a showman who launched a new breed of sporting hero. By commentator Sid Waddell (right)



ALAN EVANS, universally known as "Evans the Arrow" since the early 1970s, died last weekend in Barry, South Glamorgan, at the age of 49.

It would be hard to imagine a less prepossessing character than this little Welsh genius whose image launched professional darts on television. He had spots, unruly hair, gappy teeth and the temper, at times, of a polecat. But when he crossed tungen with his pal, Leighton Rees, his arch adversary Eric Bristow and fellow cockbird, Jocky Wilson, it was pure sporting poetry.

I first met "Rhonda Fats" when he came to Leeds in 1973 to play in the TTV Indoor League which I produced. Alan brought with him a dozen of the footy-stylish fans who had almost swept him to victory in the previous year's News of the World final. He lost - but his Denis Law-style victory leaps and playing to the crowd had entranced the audience on ITV's World of Sport.

Again, at Indoor League, he didn't win - but he didn't need to. Once Evans approached the oche there was a hush. He would swallow a good half of his pint of lager or cider. He would

balance, graceful as Nureyev. The eyes would squint like Geronimo. "One hundred and eighty", yelled the caller. Up would go the right arm. On Boxing Day, 1974, he finished an exhibition at the Ferndale Labour Club in the Rhondda with 150 in three bulls.

By the summer of 1974, Alan was making £70 a night at exhibitions, touring the country in a mauve Daimler Sovereign - but coming second too often in big darts tournaments. Then came the breakthrough. In the next 12 months he won the British Open and World Masters titles. Dressed in the white flares of a Welsh Elvis he jumped around the stage brandishing a leek. The legend had begun.

After a visit to Batley Variety Club he told me: "I signed more autographs than Lovelace Watkins". In 1976 he walked off the Johnny Carson Show in America after being asked to throw darts backwards through his legs using a mirror. "I'm a dart player, not a bloody clown", he hissed.

Over the next two years he and his pal, Leighton Rees, then a National Coal Board storeman, took on all-comers for

big money in the working men's clubs of South Wales. One day, from the North, came Brian Longworth and John Lowe with two bus-load of supporters.

John recalls: "It was amazing this day at Maerdy. Two blokes stood down by the stage with two cardboard boxes in front of them. One was for Evans and Rees, one for Lowe and Longworth. There were dozens of blokes chucking money in the Welsh box. Our lot from Yorkshire couldn't match it. So some of the Welsh backed us just for fun. When we teed the oche there was a total state of £1,500 riding on the match!"

On that occasion Alan and Leighton lost but their moment came in early 1978 at the first ever Embassy World Professional Darts Championship at The Heart of the Midlands nightclub in Nottingham. I will never forget the atmosphere as Evans and Rees stepped up to the quarter-final. Typically, each had "warmed up" on several pints of lager.

The crowd sensed that these two were not bosom buddies tonight. Evans started the match with a 180 and won the first leg in 13 darts. The match was a classic. At 2-2 Rees de-

livered a killer leg - 137, 180, 180, double two. A 10 dart leg. He went on to win 6-3.

A couple of nights later, when Rees won the title and was smoking cigars and pouring bubbly, Alan quipped: "Pick-fords have just been on the phone offering to drive you round, Leight."

The verbal was telling so chummy when Evans, to a dragon flag, a couple of leeks and sporting a badge reading "Proud to be Welsh", took the oche against other rivals at the Embassy.

I don't know if there was ever any personal animosity between Alan and Eric Bristow

but in their early meetings they went at it like two fighting cocks who had not spilled blood for a while. Bristow, then as now, likes a quick game. But Evans was a master at slowing the game down, thus putting an opponent's rhythm off.

It came to the boil on the night of 8 February, 1979 at the Embassy World Professional at Jolles, Stoke-on-Trent. Bristow, aged 21, was still smarting from a first round defeat the previous year by a tortoise-slow American, Conrad Daniels. When Evans em-

ployed the same technique in their quarter-final, sparks, harsh language and gestures resulted. It was magic television. Alan won the match in the very last leg.

It was the same story, but with less vitriol and more showmanship when Evans played Jocky Wilson. The result was the same - vivid sporting aggression between two little blokes the punters could empathise with.

It could be argued that Alan never achieved his full potential. He never won the Embassy title. One reason, Leighton Rees suggests, is the two-year ban in the early 80s from all British Darts Organisation events - imposed for an incident including an official, Al-

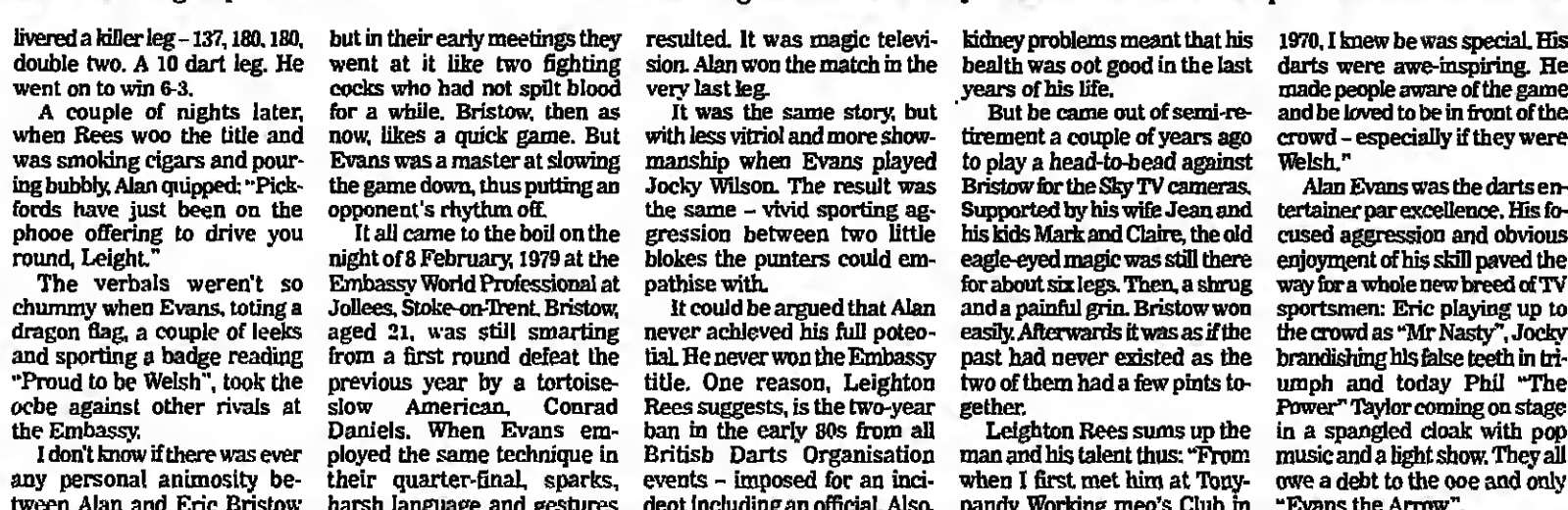
kidney problems meant that his health was not good in the last years of his life.

But he came out of semi-retirement a couple of years ago to play a head-to-head against Bristow for the Sky TV cameras. Supported by his wife Jean and his kids Mark and Claire, the old eagle-eyed magic was still there for about six legs. Then, a shrug and a painful grin. Bristow won easily. Afterwards it was as if the past had never existed as the two of them had a few pints together.

Leighton Rees sums up the man and his talent thus: "From when I first met him at Tony-pandy Working men's Club in 1970, I knew he was special. His darts were awe-inspiring. He made people aware of the game and he loved to be in front of the crowd - especially if they were Welsh."

Alan Evans was the darts entertainer par excellence. His focused aggression and obvious enjoyment of his skill paved the way for a whole new breed of TV sportsman: Eric playing up to the crowd as "Mr Nasty", Jocky brandishing his false teeth in triumph and today Phil "The Power" Taylor coming on stage in a spangled cloak with pop music and a light show. They all owe a debt to the oche and only "Evans the Arrow".

Alan Evans (right) poses with his fellow Welshman and friend Leighton Rees after they became Men's Pairs champions in 1979. Eric Harlow



FIRST SHOW

Newbury 2.40

	C	H	L	B	T
Charles Barrios	7.2	4.1	3.2	B.2	4.1
Torreson	11.2	11.2	5.1	11.2	11.2
Sietema	7.1	6.1	11.2	3.2	13.2
Maryland Bar	8.1	8.1	P.1	8.1	8.1
Peggy King	** 8.4	7.1	** 7.1	7.1	7.1
Central Coast	10.1	10.1	8.1	9.1	9.1
Schmizel	10.1	9.1	8.1	10.1	11.1
Mid Specialization	12.1	12.1	12.1	14.1	12.1
Pet Of Mine	14.1	12.1	12.1	11.1	11.1
Stumblings	12.1	14.1	14.1	12.1	14.1
My Team	12.1	11.1	16.1	14.1	12.1
Biologging	16.1	10.1	11.1	12.1	14.1

Each-way: a quarter box odds, places 1, 2, 3

C Doral H Wm H L Landores S Stanley T Tote

Newbury 3.40

	C	H	L	S	T
Lowell	9-2	5-1	9-2	5-1	5-1
Sylvia Presider	8-1	8-1	6-1	13-2	5-1
Primo Luca	8-1	5-2	7-1	8-1	8-1
Shaded Coin	11-7	7-3	8-1	8-1	7-3
Oil	9-1	7-1	8-1	5-2	8-1
Moon Shifter	8-1	5-2	5-1	9-1	9-1
Night Flight	10-1	10-1	10-1	10-1	10-1
Brown Edge	10-1	11-1	11-1	13-1	13-1
Blackwood Bell	9-1	12-1	12-1	9-1	10-1
Conchita Castle	10-1	14-1	14-1	14-1	14-1
The Gray Fox	11-1	11-1	12-1	11-1	11-1
At Large	20-1	20-1	20-1	20-1	20-1
Ray Prince	25-1	25-1	25-1	25-1	25-1
Margara	35-1	35-1	40-1	35-1	35-1

Each week a quarter the odds place, 1, 2, 3

RACING RESULTS

NEWMARKET

Going: Good
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Giggs' goal a winner in every respect

The perfectly timed strike by the Manchester United winger will live long in the memory of every football supporter.

By Glenn Moore



SINCE THE explosion of televised football coverage the game's currency, goals, has been debased. A goal is still worth the same as it was 30 years ago but the best ones no longer sear themselves into the memory in the way they used to. Then the only goals seen were the relative few watched in the flesh, and the dozen or so per week that featured on *The Big Match* and *Match of the Day*. Since most goals, then as now, are ordinary a great goal, such as Justin Fashanu's burn and volley for Norwich against Liverpool, stuck in the mind for years.

Now every goal scored in the professional game is recorded with the result that there is usually one Premiership cracker in *Match of the Day* while the aficionados and insomniacs who watch *Nationwide League Extra* see half-a-dozen a week. It thus takes something really special to stand out. David Ginola's juggled volley against Ferencváros, Trevor Sinclair's overhead kick for Queen's Park Rangers, Michael Owen's World Cup sprint.

Ryan Giggs' goal for Manchester United against Arsenal at Villa Park on Wednesday night was that. The context, an extra-time goal in a stunning FA Cup semi-final replay, eclipses all but Owen's goal and, not only was Giggs' goal better, it was also a winner.



Ryan Giggs is mobbed by his Manchester United team-mates after his extraordinary extra-time goal at Villa Park on Wednesday sent Alex Ferguson's team through to the FA Cup final. Reuters

When Giggs picked up the ball, well inside his own half, from a loose pass by Patrick Vieira, there was enough space in front of him to prompt the thought: "Go on, run at them, see what happens." Giggs in full flight is one of the most thrilling sights in the game but it is rarely seen, either he chooses a safer option or the opposition are too tight on him.

On Wednesday night there were no better options. United, down to 10 men, were unable to support their attacks. Arsenal,

tired themselves and committed to pushing forward, were slow to get close to Giggs. By the time they did he had picked up a head of steam. His 70-yard dribble took him past three of the Gunners' famous back four - Lee Dixon, Martin Keown and Tony Adams - plus Vieira. Dixon he beat twice.

With respect to Barnsley, this made it rather better than Ginola's recent FA Cup goal, even if Giggs, having come on as a substitute, was fresher than his opponents. Yet it

looked, as he approached the six-yard box, that he had run out of space but the finish, a rising drive into the roof of the net, was as good as the preamble.

Inevitably, after a high like that, yesterday morning brought a hangover as United counted the cost. Giggs, who suffered a late ankle injury, is unlikely to play against Sheffield Wednesday on Saturday but should be available for next week's European Cup semi-final second leg against Juventus. The condition of Peter

Schmeichel, who was hobbling by the end having damaged his left side making the third of a trio of fine saves from Dennis Bergkamp, is still uncertain. So worried was Alex Ferguson he even considered putting Paul Scholes in goal. Denis Irwin, who was injured in the first match, is also doubtful while Keane will miss the Premiership match with Aston Villa on 1 May following his dismissal.

Should United beat Juventus, they will have another problem. The FA Cup final is four days before the European Cup final against Bayern Munich or Dynamo Kiev in Barcelona.

As for Arsenal, they have an extra two days to recover before playing Wimbledon on Monday. Marc Overmars and bruised confidence, having been outplayed for much of both matches, are their biggest problems. Chelsea, incidentally, host Leicester on Sunday.

The final will, surprisingly, be the first between the Uniteds of Manchester and Newcastle though they have made 26 previous appearances between them. They have met twice in the competition, Manchester prevailing in both the fifth round in 1990 and the semi-final in 1999. They have also met once at Wembley in the Charity Shield in August 1996, Manchester winning 4-0.

In addition Manchester United, now unbeaten in 24 matches since December, have not lost to Newcastle in five matches since the 5-0 drubbing at St James' Park in October 1996. Should the Magpies bother

turning up, then? Definitely. Just remember, Arsenal were unbeaten in 21 matches, and had won four and drawn two of their previous six games with Manchester United, when they arrived at Villa Park on Wednesday.

Alan Shearer v Jaap Stam, Dietmar Hamann v Roy Keane, Andy Cole v his old team, Ruud Gullit v Alex Ferguson. It could be a contest to savour, but we will be very, very lucky if the drama matches the night Giggs jiggled at the Villa.

Poles are on the brink

POLAND

THE POLISH football association (PZPN) said yesterday it would continue to defy FIFA's demand to name a date for a leadership election - and would not hold one for at least three months.

The PZPN has been playing a dangerous bluffing game with world football's governing body by ignoring an 8 April deadline for calling an election, despite warnings that Poland could be expelled from the 2000 European Championship.

Poland's sports minister, Jacek Dembski, has accused the PZPN of incompetence and corruption, and recently threatened to resign if new leaders were not elected by early August.

The PZPN missed FIFA's deadline because of what it called "procedural reasons". Its spokesman, Tomasz Jagodzinski, said: "We sent them a detailed explanation of why our board will meet on 29 April, when it will choose a date for the election. I don't think it will be sooner than three months."

FOOTBALL AROUND THE WORLD

EDITED BY
RUPERT METCALF

Marian Dziurawicz, the autocratic long-time leader of the PZPN, has refused to either bring the election forward from next year, or to step down as promised.

BULGARIA

POLAND MAY not be the only country chucked out of England's Euro 2000 qualifying group. Bulgaria's Supreme Administrative Court has upheld a government decision to revoke the licence of the beleaguered Bulgarian Football Union (BFU).

The BFU has allegedly failed to act over a doping case and allowed unlicensed clubs to play in the league. The BFU president, Ivan Slavkov,

has warned that if the licence was revoked Bulgaria could be excluded from international competition.

The State Committee for youth, physical education and sports, the equivalent of a sports ministry, accused the BFU management of failing to take action in a doping case ahead of last year's World Cup finals. The midfielder Iliya Gruev, who tested positive for a banned anabolic steroid last April, was dropped from the country's World Cup squad but was not otherwise punished. The other allegation concerned Gruev's club, Neftochimik Bourgas, who apparently lack an approved professional licence.

GERMANY

JENS LEHMANN, Borussia Dortmund's German international goalkeeper, was yesterday given a three-match ban by the disciplinary commission of the German Football Federation for pulling the hair of the Hansa Rostock midfielder Timo Lange in a Bundesliga match won 2-0 by Rostock last Saturday.

Zidane ready to leave Juventus

ZINEDINE ZIDANE is prepared to walk out on Juventus at the end of the year. The French playmaker admitted yesterday that he is not happy in Turin and wants to move to Spain.

"I want to play in Spain. I don't know when but one day I will," Zidane said. "My wife is Spanish, we have Spanish friends and I want to move there. I have never hidden my problems about the life here in Turin. I will finish this season and then see."

Zidane is under contract

with Juventus until 2004 but friends of the player say there is no way he will remain with the Italian side for another four years. Even if Juventus beat Manchester United in the semi-finals of the European Cup on Wednesday and then go on to win the title, Zidane says it will not change his mind about his future. "Juventus have shown that they can win the big matches but my wife, my family and my lifestyle count more than my job," he said.

Zidane is believed to be also

unhappy with the tactics used by the Juve new coach, Carlo Ancelotti.

Graham Souness looks likely to be another on his way at the end of the season - but his departure as Benfica coach will be against his will. Reports yesterday indicated that the former Real Madrid coach, Jupp Heynckes, will replace Souness next season.

The press and many Benfica fans have fiercely criticised Souness for what are seen as British-style tactics. After Ben-

fica lost a home game against Boavista last month, many of the 80,000 fans at the Stadium of Light waved white handkerchiefs as a sign of farewell. With seven League games left to play, Benfica are six points behind the Portuguese League leaders, Porto.

The former Benfica midfielder Jonas Thern is leaving Rangers and returning home to Sweden after failing to recover from a serious knee injury. The 32-year-old has not played this season following surgery.

England are among the eight seeded nations in this summer's 60-strong Intertoto Cup. The draw, made yesterday, offers a relatively easy passage for a major club to reach the UEFA Cup by the "back entrance".

England's top-seeded club would face the winner of a series of matches involving teams from Wales, Malta, Finland or Estonia to enter the "semi-final" round of 12 chasing the three places on offer. Aston Villa are one of several clubs to express an interest.

Cheltenham closing in on championship

JUST TWO more wins from their remaining five Nationwide Conference fixtures will secure the championship for Cheltenham Town and guarantee promotion to the Football League.

While Cheltenham were beating Kingstons 1-0 at home on Tuesday, thanks to Neil Grayson's first-half penalty, their title rivals Rushden & Diamonds were losing 2-1 to Yeovil Town at Nene Park. Warren Patmore and Dave Piper gave the visitors a 2-0 interval

NON-LEAGUE NOTEBOOK

BY RUPERT METCALF

lead, Rushden's only reply was a late goal from Colin West.

That was a crucial victory for Yeovil, because it maintained their outside chance of snatching the title should Cheltenham suffer a collapse in form. Hayes are also fringe contenders, following their 1-0 home win over Hednesford Town on Tuesday.

earned by Lee Charles' 17th Conference goal of the season.

Kettering Town occupy second place in the table, five points behind the Robins, with only two games left to play. Hayes are in third place, behind Kettering on goal difference, and they have three remaining fixtures. Rushden are fourth, two points further adrift with four to play, while fifth-placed Yeovil are four points behind Rushden with six matches left. Cheltenham entertain their

Gloucestershire rivals Forest Green Rovers next Tuesday and then they have another home game against Yeovil two days later. Six points will mean a party at Whaddon Road that could keep half the county awake. Two defeats, though, will mean that Yeovil, Rushden and Hayes who are at home to Cheltenham tomorrow week will begin to fancy their chances again.

In tomorrow's FA Umbro Trophy semi-final second leg at

Whaddon Road, Cheltenham meet Kingstons for the third time in eight days. The first leg at Kingsmeadow last weekend was drawn 2-2.

The second leg takes place on Sunday lunchtime at The Lawn, Nailsworth, where Forest Green will be hoping to make sure that at least one Gloucestershire club reaches the final on 15 May. They drew 1-1 in the first leg away to the Rymans League outfit, St Albans City, last Saturday.

Audi geared for assault on Le Mans

MOTOR RACING

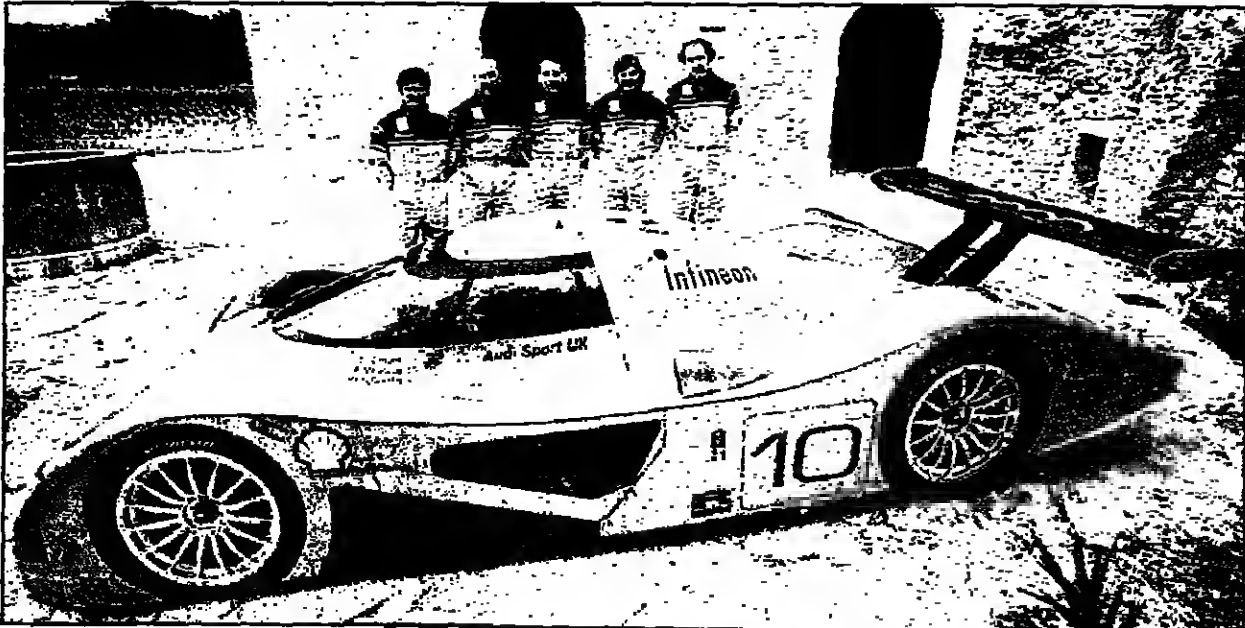
BY DERICK ALLSOP
in Le Castellet

THREE ENGLISHMEN confronted the challenge of delivering Audi a debut victory in the Le Mans 24 hour race here yesterday. Perry McCarthy, Andy Wallace and James Weaver began testing in earnest the R8C, Audi UK's monster in a sleek silver-grey shell, at Paul Ricard, the former French Grand Prix circuit.

A programme of intensive work is scheduled in preparation for the sports car classic on 12 June. Audi are taking no half-measures in this assault on Le Mans. They are entering two open-top R8R cars and two closed-top R8Cs in the hope of maximising their prospects.

The R8R, run by the hugely experienced Joest team, will have the advantage of wider tyres and fewer changes, while the R8C will be quicker.

The British squad intend to capitalise on that 220mph weapon, which they unveiled in the more sedate environment



Audi UK's Le Mans sleek silver-grey "monster", the R8C, and the team's drivers, from left, Stephane Ortelli, Perry McCarthy, Andy Wallace, Didier Theys and James Weaver, pictured before preparations for the big race

of a wine producer's chateau near here.

"We think this car will set the standard this year," said the bullish Weaver, a veteran of 11 Le Mans outings. "Generally,

you'd say an open-top car should win the race but I believe this car gives us an excellent chance."

"Le Mans gets quicker every year. It's no longer just an endurance race, it's a sprint.

You have to go flat out all the time. I'd say reliability wins it one year in eight."

Weaver, 44, is still seeking his first win at Le Mans. His best finish is a second, in 1983. Wal-

lace won the event in 1988 and feels it is time he did so again.

"The car has arrived later than we would have liked but a lot of it has been adapted from the R8R and the important

thing is to come up with the right car. We've got a lot of testing between now and the race and hopefully we'll have the reliability as well as the performance," Wallace said.

McCarthy, who failed to finish the race in two attempts, believes the make-up of the crew could be a crucial factor in their favour.

"We know each other very well. We get on well and we work together well," he said. "That's important in a race like this. It really is teamwork. It's tough work and Brits tend to be good in situations like this. We pull together."

The other nine members of the Audi squad come from Italy, France, Germany, Sweden and Belgium. They include four other Le Mans winners: Michele Alboreto, Stefan Johansson, Laurent Aiello and Stephane Ortelli.

"It's a very strong, experienced and talented line-up," McCarthy said. "Audi are putting a massive effort into this. They want success at Le Mans and are doing everything possible to achieve it."

Doohan steers clear of discussing future

MOTORCYCLING

BY WYN GRIFFITHS

ago, "I've made my best start and so I need to follow that with a win in Australia," the Honda works rider said yesterday. "It's really the home round for me and I know there will be a lot of people wanting to see me win."

The former world champion Troy Corser, from Australia, is determined to make up for what he saw as a disappointing start at Kyalami when he took a second and third in the two races.

The Australian won the title at Phillip Island in 1996 and also won there in 1995. He did much of his pre-season testing on the track in Victoria but expects the surface to have worn since then and for temperatures to be considerably cooler this weekend.

Carl Fogarty, the three-times world champion from Blackburn, leads the standings with a maximum 50 points and boasted: "It was easy at Kyalami. The other riders didn't know what had hit them."

The New Zealander, Aaron Slight, is ready to step up the pace in front of what he calls his "home fans" in the World Superbikes' championship at Phillip Island track in Australia, also on Sunday.

Slight, often a runner-up in the past, came in third and second in South Africa three weeks

Cooke joins City for £1m

FOOTBALL
BY KIERAN DALY

MANCHESTER CITY have signed Terry Cooke from their neighbours United in a £1m deal. The Manchester City manager, Joe Royle, has agreed to pay over the top for the popular winger, who has been a success on loan and can now play for Second Division side for the rest of the season. Cooke signed a three-year contract yesterday 24 hours before he was due to go back to Old Trafford, after weeks of negotiating. The two clubs have settled on a fee of £800,000 up front with a possible further £400,000 in instalments based on how Manchester City do.

"We have possibly paid over the top," Royle said. "He could have moved for less at a tribunal in the summer, but it was going to be this way because of the circumstances. We have paid a premium because we have had three good months out of Terry already that has let us get a look at the lad."

"We're happy with the deal, United are happy and the player is happy. It's just a question of getting him to put pen to paper. The problem is that his girlfriend is due to give birth at any moment, but if it means getting the forms to the delivery room then that's what we'll do."

Robbie Fowler will appeal to the Football Association about his two-game ban for rude gestures towards Graeme Le Saux, backed by new video evidence. The Liverpool striker was found guilty of the offence last week, but now has a tape from the BBC that shows that the Chelsea left-back struck him more than once.

Fowler's appeal means that he can carry on playing this season while the FA sets a new date for his hearing. However, Fowler will be missing at the start of next season. Even if the Le Saux ban is lifted, he would begin the new campaign suspended.

Dundee are planning to groundshare with Airdrie in Cumbernauld if construction work at their Dens Park home is not completed by 31 July. It would mean Dundee supporters making a round trip of 160 miles to see their side.

The Serie A side Sampdoria will provide the opposition against Sunderland for Kevin Ball's testimonial at the Stadium of Light on 31 July.

Ball, the former Portsmouth midfielder, moved north in July 1990 and has been a key figure in Sunderland's achievements over the last nine years, culminating in promotion to the Premiership, which was confirmed at Bury on Tuesday night.

The Sampdoria president, Marco Mottovani, is delighted to be providing the opposition for the 34-year-old's big day. "We are very pleased to accept the invitation to play Sunderland at the Stadium of Light," he said. "It is important to honour a player who has been a vital part of their team for so long."

An all-star XI will take on a Peter Reid XI to kick off the day.

Westwood breaks Macau record

LEE WESTWOOD shot a first round 66 to take joint leadership in the Macau Open yesterday and break the course record.

Westwood shared top spot with Kang Wook-soon of South Korea with a group of four players, including Britain's Chris Williams, a stroke behind. Darren Clarke is six strokes off the pace with 72.

Westwood, who arrived in Macau on Wednesday after his efforts in the Masters, notched

GOLF
BY PHIL CASEY

up six birdies to break the record of four-under-par 67 set last year both by defending champion Satoshi Oide of Japan and Fiji's Vijay Singh.

"I wasn't aware it was a course record," said Westwood, who added that he had not really adjusted to the time change and tired at the end of the round.

Kang, who was the Asian PGA No 1 player last year, had an eagle and five birdies to match Westwood's score. "I worked hard last winter and I have been practising very hard," said the South Korean.

One stroke behind were the South Korean Choi Kyung-jun, Thailand's Prayad Marksaeng, Williams and the American Andrew Pitts. Defending champion Oide shot a one-under-par 70 to finish in 16th place.

This is the second year that the tournament has been held in the Portuguese enclave, which reverts to Chinese rule in December.

In Portugal itself, England's Van Phillips survived the worst of the Portuguese weather could throw at him to claim the lead in the first round of the Estoril Open. The 27-year-old from Maidenhead battled through gusting winds, torrential rain, sunshine and even a brief hail-

storm at Penha Longa to fire an opening 69 and set the early target.

Three birdies in the first four holes gave him the perfect start and he fought back well after consecutive bogeys to play the back nine in one under with a birdie and eight pars, despite the return of the strong winds which had forced yesterday's pro-am to be cancelled.

That left him one shot ahead

of playing partners David Carter and Ireland's Paul McGinley, who also mastered the conditions to post rounds of 70, two under par, along with South African Retief Goosen, making his comeback after breaking his arm skiing earlier this year.

Phillips, who claimed his first European Tour win in the Algarve Open last month, joked: "It's a pity not every event is in Portugal. I'd have

settled for that before the start. It was horrible for the first few holes this morning - cold with wind and rain. It was probably a two-club wind and on some holes you had to hit some really risky shots, aiming 30 yards left of the green and just hoping the wind will blow it back."

Justin Rose's troubles had earlier continued with a six-over-par 78, although the 18-year-old battled well after being five over after his first six holes.



The Dutchman Richard Krajicek concentrates on defeating Germany's David Prinosil 6-4, 6-4 in the Japan Open yesterday Reuters

Mims attempts to lift the Leopards

HILLSBOROUGH, the Sheffield Wednesday ground at the centre of media attention this week on the 10th anniversary of the football disaster, is the base for the Greater London Leopards ahead of tonight's Budweiser Championship play-off quarter-final at Ponds Forge.

The Leopards, beaten 100-82 by the Sheffield Sharks on Wednesday night, hope that their choice of practice venue will give them a decisive edge in their final encounter.

Hillsborough's facilities

BASKETBALL
BY RICHARD TAYLOR

include a full-sized basketball court with a sprung wooden floor and Leopards' coach, Billy Mims, said: "We've trained at Sheffield Wednesday twice before when we played the Sharks. The first time was when we won the National Cup in 1997 and then in our final league game last season when we won the title."

Sheffield's attempt to reach Wembley, and add the play-off

to the League and National Cup crowns, was knocked off course by Sunday's defeat at Leopards in the first leg of their best-of-three series.

The Sharks coach, Chris Finch, said: "The Leopards are aggressive and athletic. If you don't match them you will be blitzed like we were in the first game. We had to show more teeth."

In Wednesday's match the Leopards' playmakers panicked in front of Sheffield's zone defence, allowing the Sharks to score 14 points off

turnovers in the first half alone. Mims said: "They were unforgotten errors. Our guards either drove up blind alleyways or tried to pass the ball through crowds of players."

Todd Caulthorne, nursing an ankle injury which had prevented him from training, kept his 6ft 6in frame largely out of the battle under the baskets and hit seven long range three-pointers in his game-high 30 points. Finch said: "Todd did what his injury allowed him to do. Their defence collapsed on our guys under the basket and

Todd stayed in the clear on the outside."

Mims said: "Todd hit some nice shots but I don't think we contested any of them. We might as well have rolled a rack of balls out to him and said: 'Have a three point shoot-out.'"

Thames Valley Tigers, last season's beaten play-off finalists, were the first to book their Wembley return with Wednesday's 114-93 win over Derby Storm. John McCord's 39 points led Tigers to a 2-0 series win.

Boxing

"Every time I turned my ankle I was in agony, but there was no way I was going to show the pain," Ingle said.

Although knocked down three times by Hamed, Ingle said the champion's punches were not as hard as he had expected. "They were hard, but I've been hit harder before," he said. "It was his accuracy and his correct technique that was the telling factor."

Boxing

Boxing

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Boxing

Wigan put their faith in Jones

RUGBY LEAGUE
BY DAVE HADFIELD

PHIL JONES, plucked from Lancashire Lynx last month, will make his Wigan debut at Halifax tonight. The 21-year-old stand-off is among the substitutes for the injury-hit Super League title-holders at The Shay after less than one full game in the reserves.

Jones injured his ankle on his second-team debut, but has recovered and is given his senior opportunity by the absence of Wigan's latest casualties, Paul Johnson and Simon Haughton. Rob Ball starts in the second row in place of Haughton, while Wes Davies continues at full-back, but Jones' rapid elevation is the most startling development.

Jones' one-time team-mate at the Hindley junior club, Jon Clarke, is back in training with Wigan after being released from a young offenders' institution. The Great Britain Academy hooker was sentenced to 18 months' detention, reduced to six, for assault and has now been freed early - albeit with an electronic tag.

Halifax expect to have the former Wigan prop Kelvin Skerrett back after a broken arm for a match that will be an early test for their belief that they have put recent financial wrangles behind them.

The Leeds veteran, Daryl Powell, gets a chance to set aside any doubts about his fitness for the Challenge Cup

final when he makes his return after a foot injury in tonight's meeting with Hull.

At the other end of the scale, 18-year-old Chris Chapman, a centre or winger who has impressed in the Alliance team, is drafted in for his first-team debut in a match their coach Graham Murray hopes will see his side put any thoughts of Wembley out of their minds after a sub-standard performance at Sheffield.

"We have put last week's game behind us," said Murray. "We won't dwell on it and we will start playing football like we know we can."

Stuart Cummings, who missed out narrowly to Russell Smith for the appointment to referee at Wembley, is to take charge of the Test between Australia and New Zealand next Friday. The two countries have had a change of heart after originally deciding to put an Australian in charge.

"I'm delighted that they have not pursued their original proposal of not having a neutral referee," said the RFL's director of referees, Greg McCallum. "Stuart has been one of the most consistent performers in the world for several years and will undoubtedly do a superb job in the ANZAC Test."

Saracens suffer as Wallace is ruled out

RUGBY UNION
BY DAVID LLEWELLYN

SARACENS WERE dealt a cruel blow yesterday in their preparations for the big match against the All-Ireland Premiership One leaders Leicester at Welford Road when they learned that Paul Wallace's season is over. The Ireland prop goes into hospital for an operation on a long-standing groin injury next week and will miss the fierce battle between clubs for European places.

Paddy Johns, the Saracens' Irish lock who played behind Wallace in the win over Italy last weekend, is also out of tomorrow's match with a swollen elbow and joins a casualty list which includes the England scrum-half Kyran Bracken, who hopes to recovery from a

knee injury before the end of the season.

The Rebel clubs Cardiff and Swansea yesterday met a four-man negotiating team from the Welsh Rugby Union in an effort to settle the row which led to the clubs being fined £50,000 each for playing in unsanctioned matches against All-Ireland Premiership clubs.

The Scottish Rugby Union is seeking alternative venues to Murrayfield and the Borders for World Cup warm-up matches against Argentina and Romania in an effort to promote the sport in less traditional areas.

Adey keeps Britain on track

ICE HOCKEY

GREAT BRITAIN completed the first step towards regaining the world's elite following a 4-2 victory over Hungary in Pool B of the World Championships in Rødovre, Denmark, yesterday.

Coach Peter Woods' side guaranteed themselves a top-four place in the eight-nation group and with it a crack at the play-offs for Pool A qualification.

The victory has also set up a gold medal showdown with the host nation tomorrow in the final match of the tournament, although the Danes' superior goal difference appears crucial.

Ice Hockey

Ice Hockey

Ice Hockey

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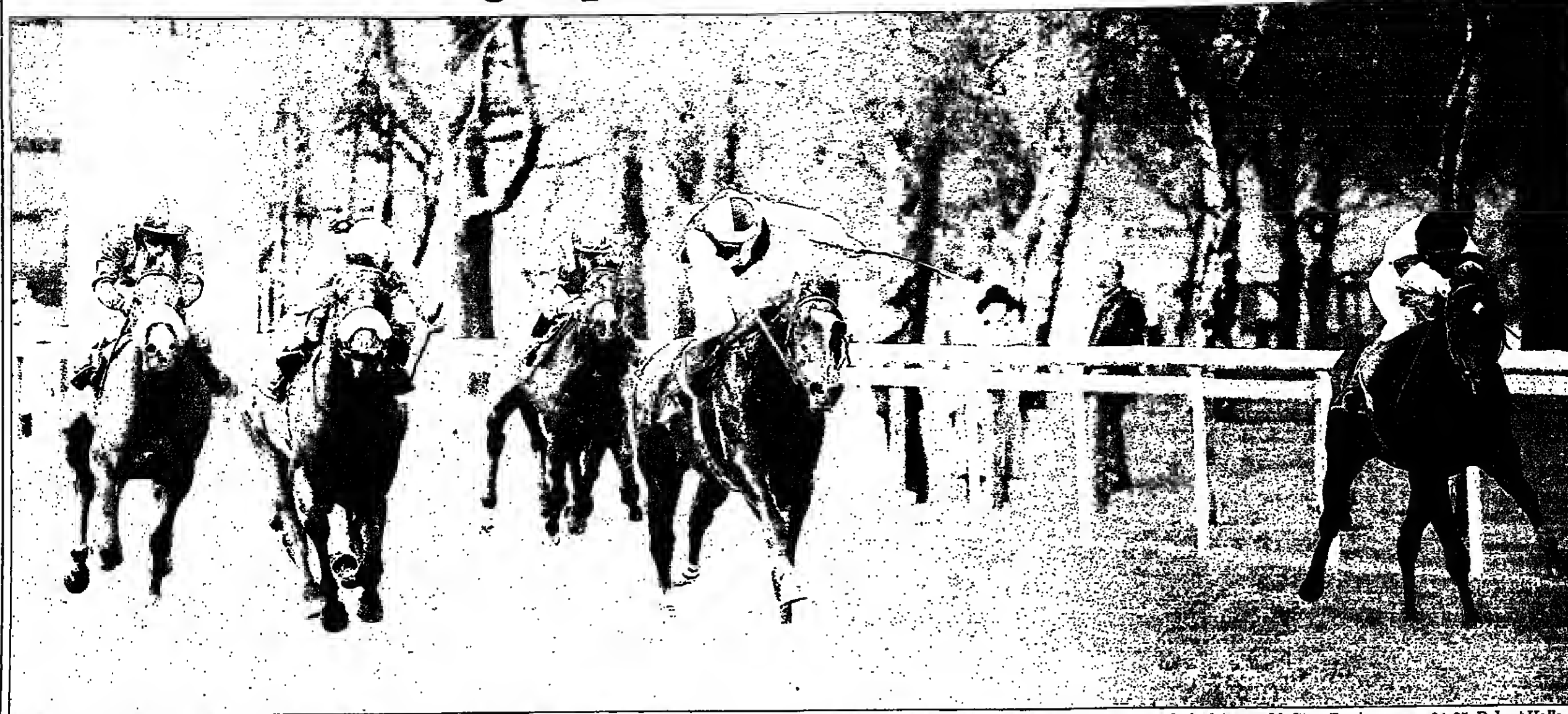
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SPORT

THE GLORY OF GIGGS P26 SHARRON DAVIES SHOWS THE WAY P22

Dreams and betting slips discarded as Guineas favourite flops



Mujahid (blue silks, third right), the long-time favourite for the 2,000 Guineas, struggles home fifth in yesterday's Craven Stakes at Newmarket, won by Compton Admiral (second left) Racing, pages 24, 25; Robert Hallam

United wait on Giggs injury

MANCHESTER UNITED could pay a hefty price for their FA Cup victory over Arsenal on Wednesday night.

Top of the list of walking wounded are Ryan Giggs and Peter Schmeichel, who suffered an ankle strain in a challenge with Lee Dixon near the end of the gripping encounter, left Villa Park on crutches, although he should be fit for next Wednesday's European Cup semi-final second leg against Juventus in Turin.

Schmeichel, who made a series of fine saves including a penalty save from Dennis Bergkamp, suffered a groin injury and had to play on be-

FOOTBALL
BY MARK PIERSON

cause United had used up their three substitutes. The Dane is likely to sit out tomorrow's game against Sheffield Wednesday at Old Trafford in the hope of being fit to face Juventus.

To add to Ferguson's worries, Jesper Blomqvist came off complaining of a foot problem, while Phil Neville may well be pressed into action on the left wing against Wednesday tomorrow.

Henning Berg is already out with ankle ligament trouble and United will also have to do

without their captain Roy Keane against Aston Villa on 1 May after he picked up a one-match ban for his sending off on Wednesday night.

Keane is firm in his belief that United's squad will be large enough to cope.

"We've used the squad a lot this season, but you really saw it's worth against Arsenal," he said. "After extra-time on Sunday and with the other games coming up, the gaffer brought other players in and they've done brilliantly. That bit of freshness helps and there are still people who can come in." On the plus side, Andy Cole will return from the ankle injury which left him on the

sidelines against Arsenal. Denis Irwin, who was confined to the bench on Wednesday with his knee problem, is likely to play, while Dwight Yorke is still fresh.

Ferguson will take a head count of who is available this morning, and he said yesterday: "The semi-final was about getting through no matter what because of the importance of the game. I'll now have to do a lot of thinking about my team for Saturday."

Although United's win over Arsenal was their first in two years, Keane does not think the result will have any bearing on the Premiership title race.

"I'm not into all that type of

thing just because we've won this game," he said. "We have an important game on Saturday and that's all I'm thinking about. I can't answer that question until the end of the season as to whether there's any psychological advantage or not."

"But I really don't think so - we won this game and forget everything else. It's got us through to the FA Cup final and that's all."

The Football League is set to follow rugby union's example and experiment with the 10-yard rule for offences in next year's Auto Windscreens Shield.

After a successful trial in Jersey, match officials will be

instructed to advance a free-kick by 10 yards if a player continues to show dissent, fails to retreat 10 yards, or delays the kick. The League is planning to use the new rule in next year's knock-out competition for Second and Third Division clubs.

The former World Cup referee, Pat Partridge, believes the new law could be a valuable weapon for match officials in the face of growing dissent problems on the pitch.

"Apparently, from the way the experiment has gone in Jersey, it has done tremendously well," Partridge said. "It is a positive move by the League if they go ahead with it."

"People say it is only Jersey but it had to be tested in competition. It has proved successful so let's give it a whirl."

Partridge said the new rule should have been a feature of the elite game when he was officiating.

"It is something which would have been ideal in my day as a referee," Partridge added. "It would save a lot of problems in this day and age. It is a system which has worked in rugby successfully."

It was announced yesterday that no tickets will be sold on the day for this year's Auto Windscreens Shield final, between Wigan and Millwall on Sunday.

Murali is still top of Red Rose wish list

CRICKET

LANCASHIRE WANT Muttiah Muralitharan rather than Glenn McGrath as their overseas player for 2000. The controversial Sri Lankan spinner will play a handful of games for the Old Trafford side this season after the World Cup and they want him to return for a full term next year.

The club are monitoring the McGrath situation now the Australian fast bowler has announced he is available for county cricket. Lancashire spokesman Dave Edmunds said: "Like all other counties we have been circled about McGrath, but we have not discussed him and we have not made an approach."

Durham were again frustrated by the weather as they progressed from 32 for 1 to 153 for 4 to lead Worcestershire by a single run after three miserable days at Chester-le-Street. Half-centuries by Jon Lewis and John Morris put the hosts in a dominant position but rain restricted the day's play to 38 overs.

Rival captains Wasim Akram and Mohammad Azharuddin find themselves under unwanted pressure as India and Pakistan prepare for the Champions Cup final in Sharjah today.

While Akram has had renewed charges of match-fixing thrown at him by a former team-mate, there are growing calls for Azharuddin to be replaced as India's World Cup captain by Ajay Jadeja.

The former Pakistani wicketkeeper Rashid Latif accused Akram and his team of throwing Monday's match against England, saying the boys were "up to their old tricks again."

"The guys are once again making fools of the public," Latif said after Pakistan crashed to a shocking 62-run defeat, England's only success in the three-nation tournament. He added that he felt "something fishy" had started again in the team.

Akram, at the centre of an ongoing judiciary inquiry on betting and match-fixing at home, dismissed Latif's claims. "Latif is a frustrated character who cannot bear to see the Pakistani team do well," Akram said. "It seems we have to win every game we play to keep the allegations at bay. As a captain, I know my team is honest and above board."

More reports, scoreboard, page 25

Pinto on the defensive over drug allegations

ATHLETICS

BY MIKE ROWBOTTOM

ANTONIO PINTO, Portugal's European 10,000 metres champion, yesterday answered allegations of doping abuse levelled at him by Britain's top distance runner, Jon Brown. Speaking during the build-up for Sunday's London Marathon, which both men will race, Pinto dismissed Brown's claim, made after his European victory in Budapest, that he had illegally enhanced his performance by taking the blood booster Erythropoietin (EPO).

Pinto, who set new personal bests for 1,500, 5,000 and 10,000m last year at the age of 32, as well as finishing third in the London Marathon, said that he had beaten Brown "fair and square" in Budapest.

"Two weeks later, he beat me fair and square in Brussels, when he set a British 10,000m record. Do I need to say anything else?"

"I have been running for more than 15 years. When I was 20 I reached the final at the Seoul Olympics, and I have performed at every major championship since. Jon Brown - I only heard of him two years ago."

Brown has repeatedly voiced his opinion over the last year that many performances in distance running have been achieved through the illegal use of EPO.

After the European Championship trials in Birmingham last summer, he pointed an accusing finger at European nations with a traditional in-

volvement in professional cycling, alleging that doctors assisted those in both sports to manipulate their performances illegally. He has since described marathon running as being "saturated with drugs".

Brown's outspoken comments are made against a background of steeply improving performances in international marathons. Eleven runners recorded times faster than 2hr 08min in 1998, and eight the year before. In the eight previous years that feat was achieved just five times.

Whether this improvement is down to improved funding, rising prize-money or illegal activity is a point that is likely to be debated long and hard. Brown, clearly, believes the answer is a simple one - EPO, which provides extra red blood cells to improve oxygen capacity and endurance, some-

thing clearly beneficial to performers in endurance sports.

Pinto himself was embroiled in controversy last year when comments were ascribed to him in which he cast doubt on the legality of training methods used by Spanish distance runners. He said that he had been misquoted.

Pinto's manager, Luis Felipe Posso, who acts for other leading marathon runners such as the Brazilian world record-holder Ronaldo Da Costa, three-times London winner Dionicio Ceron and Olympic champion Josia Thugwane, added his own views in Pinto's defence. "By Brown's argument, if Pinto used EPO to beat him in Budapest, then what did Brown use to improve so much two weeks later?"

"I honestly believe Brown is capable of running 2:07 for the marathon on Sunday. But to do that he will have to focus and believe in himself instead of concentrating on other runners in the field."

Asked if he shared Brown's

view that EPO was as big a factor in marathon running today as it has been in professional cycling, Pinto replied: "I have no idea. Until someone is caught and an offence is proven you cannot say. Let Jon Brown say what he wants. Until I know I cannot comment."

Pinto is strongly in favour of introducing blood testing into the sport. "I think it would be great," he said, "because it would put everyone on the same level. In cycling they are already doing it. I hope all sports will eventually do the same."

Alan Storey, general manager of the London Marathon, believes that blood testing cannot be introduced without the active support of the International Amateur Athletic Federation, particularly over the question of setting medical parameters.

"Most people in the sport would like to see all the changes necessary to make sure everyone is competing on a level playing field," Storey said. "But even if we could take blood samples, we would still need to employ medical expertise to decide what those samples meant and what the levels should be. It would not be a cheap operation and it is simply beyond the capabilities of a set of marathon organisers."

"This is something that has to be initiated by the IAAF, although they may be encouraged privately and publicly by national federations."



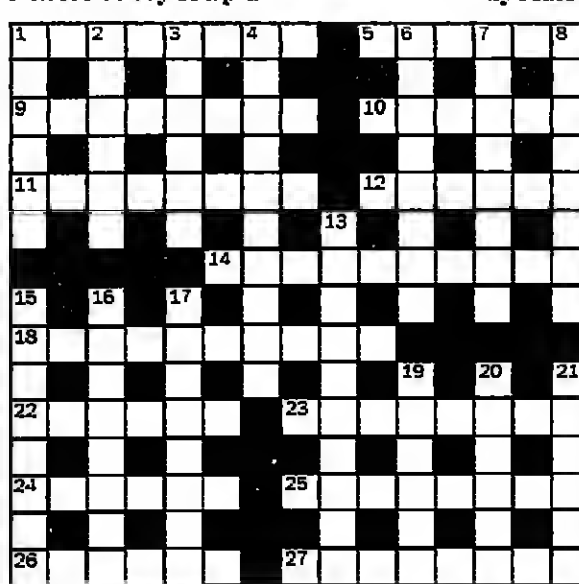
Antonio Pinto (left) and Jon Brown Allsport/Emipics

THE FRIDAY CROSSWORD

No.3898 Friday 16 April

by Mass

Thursday's solution



ACROSS
1 Apparently BA's defensive position? (4,4)
5 Pouch on Border chieftain (6)
9 Dessert supplied to roomer in guest-house (8)
10 Wretched, docked, the Spanish horse (6)
11 Kick-start in rally (8)
12 Brood about crack - and desist (4,2)
14 Clown's large heavy footwear (10)
18 Dangers at sea, violent rolls whip about stern of Argo (10)
22 Alien, one with intelligence, drifting around in cold (6)
23 Calling for a change, Hants - so I bowl over (8)

DOWN
1 Hour on dusky river (6)
2 Revelled, convinced the boat's come in (6)
3 Clement's soft-hearted (6)
4 Mad US colonel, Republican adviser (10)
6 A party laboured point in choice of candidate, say (8)
7 Dance from sailors, very good, in prospect (8)

8 Service includes cereal, it's said, on first-class railway (8)
13 Minor rise is without benefit (10)
15 Knows Pat's about to become a showman? (8)
16 Flag-waver presents beam, loaded with gin cocktail (8)
17 Set of boats, all bad, in a state (8)
19 Source of drink for chan? Time's up (6)
20 Blue bird fluttering round a lake (6)
21 Line's cast out from bulwark (6)

FRIDAY REVIEW

COMMENT • FEATURES • ARTS • PLUS THE INFORMATION DAILY



The team that vanished

In the towns and villages of rural Wales, a stranger stands out like, well, a French-speaking West African rugby player in a Day-Glo tracksuit. So how did 12 players from the Ivory Coast melt into the mists of the Black Mountains?

At the Pets in Need charity shop in Llandovery high street, a couple of homemade posters have been Ah-Backed to the window. Both are forlorn appeals for the public's help. "Jack Russell terrier called Bron lost at Mynyddi. Children grieving, £100 reward," reads one. The other, scrawled in fading green marker pen, seeks the return of a mislaid teddy bear: "Grubby grey towelling. Four inches tall. Wearing a black-and-white bow-tie."

But dogs and cuddly toys are not the only things to have mysteriously gone AWOL in Llandovery of late. Last week, the small south Wales town misplaced 12 members of the Ivory Coast rugby team who were taking part in the under-19 world championships. Due to board a flight home from Gatwick to Abidjan last Thursday, half the squad decided to extend their Welsh sojourn indefinitely, vanishing from the local college which served as their base. The Home Office issued a statement saying all 12 had overstayed their visas and could now be arrested and deported.

But that was a week ago, and despite a few phone calls, the authorities remain one step behind. On Saturday, a sharp-eyed motorist spotted two black men hitch-hiking along a road near Lustleigh in Devon. In their identical trackuits with "Ivory Coast" emblazoned on the top, they seemed to fit the description of the suspects. But by the time the police flooded the area with officers, the men had disappeared. Today, the Dyfed Dozen are still very much at large.

Not that you'd know Llandovery was the nerve-centre of a massive immigration operation when you first arrive at the sleazy backwater which stands at the foot of the Black Mountains. There are no choppers circling the River Towy. There are no snarling tracker dogs clutching trailkits between their drooping fangs. Not even a police chet in mirrored sunglasses barking orders. On a wet weekday lunchtime, the only people on the streets are morose schoolboys hanging round the telephone boxes and a pair of walkers in cagoules who are cheerfully photo-graphing the genotaph.

In theory, a dozen muscular, French-speaking 18-year-old Africans in electric-blue sportswear should not be too hard to track down in a town with no black residents. But down at the

pebble-dashed police station, Sergeant Huw Jenkins admits the Dyfed-Powys force has yet to make any real breakthrough.

"We haven't conducted any house-to-house searches, but we have circulated all the relevant details to surrounding forces," says Sergeant Jenkins, breaking off from brewing a pot of tea. "I was very surprised when they just disappeared but there's not a lot we can do really. I can't imagine they're still in Llandovery. If they were, we'd certainly have apprehended them by now. They'd stand out like a sore thumb round here."

His self-belief is slightly undermined by a bar chart on the wall behind him which shows the station's crime detection figures to be a modest 56.7 per cent. Perhaps the Dyfed-Powys force should have apprehended the danger signs. Last year, four members of an Ivory Coast rugby team absconded when they were playing a tournament in France and have yet to be found.

In the 40 years since it gained its independence from France, the Ivory Coast has been the most stable country in West Africa. Unlike

BY RICHARD

its neighbours Sierra Leone, Nigeria and Liberia, it has never suffered a military coup, military rule or civil war. Even so, beneath the mask of democracy a sense of helplessness prevails, particularly among the numerous unemployed young men – 60 per cent are out of work – and many have turned to drugs and alcohol to pass their time.

According to Unicef, 140,000 children now live in the streets, while a recent study by the World Bank reports that 60 per cent of Ivorians live in poverty without any hope of improving their lot. The economy, which carries a debt of \$19bn, has been placed under further pressure from the

700,000 refugees who have crossed the border to flee civil war in Liberia.

So great is the impulse to escape the poverty and corruption that over the past few years, thousands have stowed away on ships out of the port of Abidjan. In 1997, four Ivorians suffocated or starved after hiding away on cargo vessels bound for the UK; last year, a Danish captain admitted manhandling a teenage stowaway and throwing him overboard to certain death (the captain was imprisoned for 10 months for maltreatment). For those who do make it to Europe, the chances of asylum are slight and Interpol suspect that organised networks of friends and relatives keep them from being discovered.

In Llandudnew's wind-lashed streets, there is no shortage of amateur detectives willing to share their theories about the team's whereabouts. Most favour the official view that the Africans have forsaken the town for the metropolitan anonymity of London or Merthyr Tydfil. But others prefer to think they've fallen for the charms of the Brecon Beacons.

"They were lovely, lovely lads," says Pamela

MCCLURE

Wheat, warming herself in front of an electric fire at her charity shop. "Very polite, well-behaved fellows they were. Put our rugby lads to shame. They came in here quite a few times looking at shoes and shirts. They even bought some old Welsh bonnets—they kept on saying 'chapeaux, chapeaux.' If you ask me, they've loved being in Wales so much that they just wanted to stay on for a holiday."

Over at the Heritage centre, tourist officer Joan Snaith pauses from her paperwork to configure a piece of evidence: "The day they disappeared, one of them came in here with a bongo drum he was trying to sell," she whispers. "I got

the distinct impression he was trying to raise some money. Bongo drums aren't really our thing here, so I told him to try the craft centre across the road."

Slowly, the puzzle is being pieced together. While some of the team have bot-footed it to Devon, others have obviously gone to ground nearby, disguised in Welsh national dress and with just enough local currency to keep going until the search eases off. But where would they lie low? No clues can be gleaned from the surly shop assistant in the local Costcutters store who claims not to have noticed any furtive bulk buying. The Mayflower Chinese takeaway reports no suspiciously large deliveries to remote barns.

At the Erwin Caravan Park on the edge of town, the wizened proprietor, Cyril Rees, hasn't rented any more caravans than usual for the time of year. "Saw them play rugby at the stadium, I did. Very good, too, but they haven't been here, son," he says, scratching his head in recollection. "We did have some black people last year, though. Can't remember where they were from, but I must have been very far away because they were really black. If you're looking for the rugby boys, you could try the cave, though. That would be a smashing place to hide out."

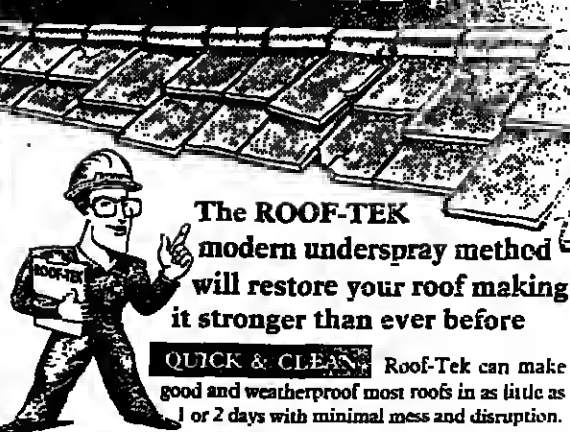
The cave. But of course.

Along with the Hamster Museum's collection of prize-winning rodents, Twm Siôn Cati's Cave is renowned as Llandovery's premier attraction. A quick flick through the tourist brochure – "the cave hideout of outlaw leader Twm Siôn Cati, Wales's 16th-century Robin Hood" – confirms its position as the ideal bolthole for bandits, hermits and other misanthropes.

Yet half an hour spent rooting round the gloomy cavern fails to unearth any clues. There are no studied boot prints or discarded jock straps on the muddy floor. The air hangs heavy with the pungent odour of damp bracken. Night is falling. It is time to concede defeat. The trail has gone stone cold.

Surprisingly, the players' continued evasion is greeted with some pride back at The Greyhound, the local rugby pub. "They're just down the coast from Rwanda, aren't they?" suggests one of the locals, keeping an eye on Sky Sports. "It can't be too easy for them over there. You can't blame them for wanting a better life. They were a nice bunch of blokes. Enjoyed a few drinks with us - nothing too rowdy. Good luck to them."

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MUSIC

IND15/04/98

Monsanto sues

Sir: Dan Verakis of Monsanto claims that, with regard to Monsanto's test sites in Britain, "only people who break the law will face action" (letter, 15 April).

This is far from being the case; no criminal prosecution has ever been taken against myself and four other women who removed GM plants from a Monsanto site last July. Rather than the lawfulness of our act of digging being considered by a jury, the legal action which we and other Genetix Snowball supporters are facing is in the form of a civil action for an injunction from Monsanto.

This lawsuit has been described as a "Slapp" - a Strategic Lawsuit Against Public Participation. Slapps, commonly used by corporations in the USA, are an attempt to silence protesters and potential protesters by suing them for defamation, injury or conspiracy, thus presenting citizens with a "price" for speaking out politically.

For a corporation which can afford to pursue injunctions this is a strategy which they believe to be more effective at silencing opponents than taking them to court and trying the lawfulness of the actual actions.

MELANIE JARMAN
Genetix Snowball
Manchester

Sir: I am touched by Monsanto's high-mindedness (letter, 15 April) in carrying out their "duty" to ensure that everyone who receives the Genetix Snowball handbook receives a copy of any relevant court order. How kind - we can have delivered to us, in our own homes, our very own injunction telling us that we may be sent to prison for up to two years for even setting foot on Monsanto's property.

And yet there is part of me which suspects that Monsanto's motives are not entirely altruistic. Monsanto has a long history of using strong-arm legal tactics, and Genetix Snowball is simply the latest target.

The truth is that Monsanto is running scared from the massive opposition in Europe to their genetically modified products. They expected us to roll over, as the Americans did, and we refused to do so.

By the way, I've got a Genetix Snowball handbook, and very interesting it is too.
ANDREA NEEDHAM
London E2

A Serb baffled

Sir: In reply to Anthony Arblaster (letter, 10 April), my partner is Serbian, and she abhors Milosevic and all his works and is appalled by the plight of the Kosovan refugees.

However, she is also appalled by the demonising of all Serbs, as if each Serb was a Milosevic clone. She is distressed by the bombing of her own country, which has predictably driven even opponents of Milosevic to support him. She is incredulous that Nato thought that bombing (preceded by the withdrawal of OSCE observers) would prompt extreme nationalists to shout, "I give up!" rather than accelerate their ethnic cleansing. She is baffled by the West's support for the KLA, a terrorist organisation which has killed many Serb civilians.

And she is disgusted by critics who forget the ethnic cleansing of hundreds of thousands of Serbs from the Krajina region of Croatia. (Her aunt died on that trek).

Apparently ethnic cleansing is morally OK and invisible to the media if it is carried out by a friendly state, but wicked when it is carried out by an enemy.

I endorse every one of these points.
DAVID WELLS
Beckenham, Kent

Sir: Graham Perkins states that the Croats "fought a brilliant six-day campaign to retake the occupied lands of the Krajina" (letter, 14 April). Would he describe the ethnic Albanians as

"occupying" Kosovo? The Croats ethnically cleansed Krajina of about 200,000 Serbs whilst US aircraft bombed Serb air defences. There was no outcry for air strikes against Tudjman's fascist campaign.

The reason Serbs were fighting in the first place was because Croatia insisted Krajina become part of an "independent" Croatia using the borders created by Pavelic and Hitler in 1941. If Mr Perkins researches the history of that era he may come to realise why no Serb wants to live in a fascist Croatia ever again.
HUGH W GLEAVES
London N10

Sir: Is the British government creeping towards a ground war in Kosovo? In this year falls the hundredth anniversary of the commencement of the Anglo-Boer war in South Africa. The cause of that war was different but is the effect the same?

At the end of the last century Britain, the superpower of the day, thought it could win a quick war against the Boer republics. In fact it took 250,000 troops, marshalling resources from across the Empire and three long years to subdue (not defeat) a rag-tag army of 20,000 farmers. But the real tragedy was that it also took the lives of an estimated 20,000 Boer women and children and the deliberate destruction of property, farms and homes.
FRANCIS HAY
Banstead, Surrey

Sir: Mr Milosevic has achieved his aim of ethnic cleansing. Let us accept it and stop the bombing. The money wasted on fighting the war would be better invested in a "Marshall plan" for Albania.
MRS UTE LANG
Longfield, Kent

Sir: Many things must be held to be disputable. One thing, however, is not, and that is that contamination of the land by long-term radioactive materials is wholly unacceptable. Any use of

such materials ought to be treated as a war crime. Nato should publicly pledge and substantiate that depleted uranium has not been and will not be employed in munitions.
MIKE TOPE
West Molesey, Surrey

Sir: In answer to David Aaronovitch ("Why do these decent folk find it so difficult to support the war?", 1 April): Let's bomb Israel for the Palestinians, let's bomb China for the Taiwanese, let's bomb North Korea for the South Koreans... we did. Let's bomb Indonesia for the trade unionists and others, let's bomb Chile for the Santiago stadium affair, let's bomb Argentina for the disappeared, let's bomb Turkey for the Kurds, etcetera. Let's just use all the bombs we have and bomb everyone. After all, are we not all guilty?
KEVIN STEWART
London W11

Sir: Steven Norris says truckers are right to protest over rises in excise duty and fuel tax (Right of Reply, 15 April). A report by the Energy Efficiency Best Practice Programme indicates that only 30 per cent of commercial fleet managers know how much they spend on fuel. Only 10 per cent of drivers have been trained in fuel-efficient driving, and fewer than 30 per cent use improved maintenance to reduce consumption. Instead of causing havoc for road users, hauliers should look at efficiency within their own operations and help to save the environment and save themselves money.
SEB BELLOE
Sustainability
London W8

Sir: Betty Perry thinks it is "acceptable to make some charge for an education which enables higher income earning" (letter, 8 April). Not all university courses give access to well-paid jobs. What of those who study music, fine art or theology? Certainly those who enjoy high incomes as a direct result of their education should contribute something in return - and they already do through paying higher taxes.
JUSTIN BRETT
Gibson, Monmouthshire

Sir: I commend David Aaronovitch for his thoughtful and balanced article (Comment, 15 April) and thank him for the support for me personally that he expressed in it. I would like to take this opportunity to state that, contrary to what might be inferred from a quotation in his

piece, I am not in any way associated with the Orange Order, particularly not its Portadown lodge.
NICK MARTIN-CLARK
London N17

Sir: In sentencing Dr Jack Kevorkian, the euthanasia practitioner, to a lengthy term of imprisonment, the judge has made it known that, in certain parts of the US, lethal injection is the privilege of the state.
NIGEL BALDWIN
Portsmouth

Sir: Sainsbury's reward card manager says loyalty cards help understanding of shoppers' preferences and tailoring of products (Right of Reply, 14 April). If you can only find J S baby carrots on the shelf how does she know you would prefer another kind?
JIM SMITH
Hythe, Kent

Threats to Turkey

Sir: Your leading article "If Turkey is to join the EU it must stop abusing the Kurds" (12 April) is an embodiment of double standards.

You urge the Western powers to give an ultimatum to Turkey to "treat its Kurdish minority decently", and you associate that minority with the PKK, one of the most blood-thirsty terrorist organisations in the world. This is tantamount to associating the Catholic minority in Ulster with the "Real IRA". You also add the threat that, if Turkey does not abide by this "ultimatum", it should not be considered for EU membership.

Undoubtedly Turkish citizens of Kurdish origin, as, indeed, other citizens, deserve to have all the rights guaranteed by the Constitution to all citizens, under normal circumstances. But there is an emergency in Turkey, where a ruthless, sanguinary and secessionist organisation is striving to dismember the country.

Turkey is merely doing its utmost to preserve its integrity, security and independence, which any sovereign state has a right to do.

I am hopeful that the general election in Turkey on 18 April will result in the accession to power of a strong and benevolent government that will tackle all the problems of its Kurdish citizens, within the boundaries of Turkey. However, threatening Turkey with ultimatums and threats of forfeiture of EU membership is counter-productive and may lead to the West's losing a good ally.

Besides, in view of the recent treatment accorded to Turkey by the EU, that organisation has lost all influence that it might have had over that state.
Professor S R SONYEL
London W1

Non-aligned

Sir: It was startling - and indeed entertaining - to see myself characterised by you as a member

of the hated boss class over the non-renewal of comedian Mark Steel's contract at *The Guardian* (Media, 13 April). I'm afraid some of your facts are wrong, however.

I did not offer Mark another six-month contract "as long as he never wrote for *The Independent* again". The truth is the opposite: I actually gave him explicit permission at the time to write what he told us would be a sports column for *The Independent*. (Whatever happened to that column for you?)

Nor did I tell him *The Guardian* was planning to realign itself politically alongside Blair. That would be silly.

You omitted to say that the demonstration at *The Guardian* on Monday appeared in fact to be organised by the Socialist Workers Party. We are not planning to align ourselves politically with them, either.
DAVID LEIGH
Comment Editor
The Guardian
London EC1

Call to oblivion

Sir: No doubt there are arguments against our joining European monetary union, but surely there must be stronger ones than John Barnett's claim that we would do better to emulate Norway and its "more dynamic" economy (letter, 14 April).

More dynamic than Germany, Italy, France or Spain? So where are all these Norwegian cars, aircraft, agricultural products, clothing, cultural artefacts? In all my 60-odd years of life I don't remember ever buying anything from Norway, or coming across anything at all, except Ibsen.

So far as I am concerned, emulation of Norway, however dynamic, would mean economic oblivion, or at best irrelevance. This is not going to convince me, or anyone else, that we must keep out of Euroland.
RON SONNET
Southsea, Hampshire

Age of consent

Sir: Your correspondents, arguing in favour of lowering the age of consent for male homosexuals, seem to assume that the purpose of age of consent laws is to define that age at which one receives the privilege of being able to have sexual intercourse (letters, 15 April).

On the contrary, their purpose is to define the age up to which children are entitled to receive protection from seduction by adults. On this basis one could just as well argue that the laws discriminate against teenage girls because the period of protection granted to them is shorter.

Any arbitrary cut-off chosen, whether 16 or 18, has to balance opposing evils: restriction of freedom on the one hand and failure to protect on the other. It seems perfectly reasonable in setting such limits to take account of emotional and physical maturity and, therefore, there is nothing necessarily illogical or "unfair" in allowing that the period for which boys should be protected from seduction by homosexual males should be longer than that offered to protect females from being seduced by heterosexual males.

What this additional period should be would be better addressed by a rational consideration of the statistics regarding onset of puberty than emotive appeals in the name of an irrelevant "equality".
Professor STEPHEN SENN
Departments of Epidemiology and Public Health and Statistical Science
University College London

Teachers' pay

Sir: I have followed the series of letters and articles in your paper on performance-related pay for teachers with a mixture of dismay and resignation. Why has nobody raised the simplest issue of all? To cross the threshold teachers have to commit themselves to three weeks of extra work in the year.

My wonderful staff, working in almost ideal conditions with small classes of eager, well-disciplined children and high levels of professional support in the classroom, are not putting themselves forward. Why? Because they are all fully committed already; they are all exhausted by the end of term, and of course, they are all women!

They care deeply about their performance and their responsibilities and they agonise about their career prospects. But they won't apply, and it causes me real anger to see this kind of unfair exploitative pressure continuing under a government which should know better, uncritically supported by a paper which should be campaigning for this particular gender issue to be dropped.

JOHN PEASNALL
Head (and only man)
Rauceby School
Lincolnshire

Fishing for votes

Sir: I could not, at first, believe my eyes. I gazed on the picture of William Hague not only eating a plate of fish and chips but sprinkling brown vinegar on it (13 April).

We used to see Harold Wilson doing things like this. He was wooing the unions and it was part of the beer-and-sandwiches-at-No-10 culture. But this is a Tory leader! He needs some new spin doctors.

The idea of Harold Macmillan eating fish and chips is quite inconceivable. Of present-day Tories, Michael Portillo might do it, but he would not let the media see. John Redwood never. I can see him eating wild locusts and honey, but not fish and chips.

If this is the sort of PR campaign the Tories are going to mount in the forthcoming elections, their vote will shrink to a hard core of backwoodsmen.
SIDNEY VINES
Salisbury

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Post letters to Letters to the Editor, The Independent, 1 Canada Square, London E14 5DL and include a daytime telephone number, fax to 0171 293 2056 or e-mail to letters@independent.co.uk. E-mail correspondents are asked to give a postal address. Letters may be edited for length and clarity.



Billingsgate No 5: a porter takes time out after barrowing fish from the refrigerated vans to the stall-holders

Kalpesh Lathigra

IN BRIEF

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JIM SMITH
Hythe, Kent

A short story about obsession, revenge and beer mats

PEOPLE OFTEN complain to me that novels are far too long these days. Not today they aren't! Here, for your reading comfort, is a COMPLETE modern novel called *The Beer Mat Lover* which is less than 1,000 words long.

"SOONER OR later you're going to have to make up your mind which one you like better - is it your wonderful collection of beer mats or is it me?"

That was the question that my wife fired at me one day about two years ago. People talk about men popping the question before they get married, but they never talk about the question that women pop after marriage has taken place, and that is the question. All men will recognise it. It is the wife gradually realising that there is something

else in a man's life apart from her and deciding to challenge it.

In your case it may be sports cars or antique guns. In my case, it's beer mats. All right, call it a silly hobby if you like, but it's no worse than collecting toy cars or theatre programmes, which plenty of grown-ups do. I once saw Dr Roy Strong, director of the Victoria & Albert as he then was, talking about the museum's collection of 18th-century watches on TV, and I remember thinking to myself - OK, it's old watches with you, mate, with me it's beer mats. But what's the big difference when it comes down to it?

In any case, beer mats teach you a lot, about geography, and about advertising, and about... well, about the different ways in which people mop up beer stains in dif-

ferent countries. All right then, beer mats don't teach you anything, but George VI collected postage stamps and what did that ever teach him? I rest my case. In my case, my wife chose a startling strategy - she decided to pretend that I really had changed and had really got rid of my beer mats. She then moved on to the task of turning me into a new man.

"What you've got to do now is get in touch with your own feelings," she would say.

One day I had nothing better to do, so I did get in touch with my own feelings. It was a revelation. I had five main feelings: fear, insecurity, jealousy, love of beer mats and revenge. I thought I would deal with the feelings of revenge first, as they sounded more fun.

"I've been in touch with my



MILES KINGSTON

One day I had nothing better to do so I got in touch with my feelings. It was a revelation

feelings," I told her. "So what do I do now?"

"Examine them honestly and

deal with them openly," she said.

I examined my feelings of revenge and found that they centred mostly on a boy called Johnson who had bullied me at school. In the years when I was getting married and having children and collecting beer mats I hadn't thought about him much, but every now and then his image would float in front of me and I would feel rage and impotent fury well up, and I would have to breathe deeply till it went away. My first wife got to know the symptoms well. Whenever I started breathing audibly she would say: "Stop thinking about Johnson."

"I can't help it," I would say. "Now that I'm big enough to hit him back, I really want to do it."

"He's probably rich and powerful by now and got a minder to stop you doing it, so don't bother."

That was the difference between my first wife and the second. My first wife told me to forget about Johnson. My second wife told me to examine my feelings of revenge and do something about them. That meant, search out Johnson and punch him. Of course, she didn't know she was encouraging me to do exactly that, but I felt sure she was right.

By an extraordinary coincidence, I bumped into an old school friend who still kept in touch with Johnson and told me where he was. While the heat of revenge was still on me, I went round to Johnson's office and demanded to see him.

"Yes?" said Johnson, looking up at me as I entered his office. He had gone grey and looked a little frail. I reckoned I could clear his desk and start punching him within

five seconds. I just needed to taunt him a bit first.

"Remember me?" I said.

"No," said Johnson.

While wondering what to say next, my eye fell on his desk. I couldn't believe it. There was a beer mat lying there.

"My God!" I said. "You've got one of the early Thomson & Wootton Kent Brewery beer mats! I've never seen one in the flesh before!"

"I collect them a bit," said Johnson. "Are you interested?"

The upshot was that instead of punching him, I asked him home to dinner to look at my collection. He and my wife got on very well. In fact, they are now living together somewhere near Amersham in Berkshire. She probably thinks she can make something of him. But once a bully, always a bully, I say.

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Aerial war demands a readiness to admit mistakes

AN AERIAL bombardment is a peculiar kind of conflict, fought as much on the television screen as in the theatre of war. The tragic, inadvertent bombing of a column of Kosovo Albanian refugees, therefore, is likely to have more impact on public support for the war than it would if British troops were committed on the ground.

As Tony Blair discovered in the bombing of Iraq, public support for firm action against tyrants may be wide, but it is not deep. There is a one-sidedness about Western technological superiority which requires force from the air to be deployed with utmost restraint: people are liable to become justifiably squeamish about television images of cities under a hail of missiles and of the "collateral" damage afterwards.

If British soldiers were fighting their way through the hills of Kosovo, with their uncanny resemblance to the British countryside, the attitude back home to casualties sustained by civilians in crossfire would be very different. But a just war from the air has to be fought so much more justly than one on the ground.

It was, therefore, unwise of the Pentagon to assert so quickly, and without any evidence, that the killing of the refugees was the work of the Serb armed forces. The correct posture would have been one of sorrow and a willingness to investigate. It is vitally important in fighting a limited war to avoid the gung-ho mentality which assumes that "our boys are always right".

The wider lesson of the tragedy on the road from Prizren to Djakovica is that it further underscores the difficulties inherent in trying from the air to eject an army of occupation. All the Serb tanks and soldiers in Kosovo cannot be identified and attacked from 16,000 feet, so the objective has to be to make life as intolerable for them as possible - while avoiding the deaths of significant numbers of civilians. It may be possible to "degrade the Serb killing machine" sufficiently from the air so that Slobodan Milosevic feels bound to pull out. But it will not be easy or quick and, if further tragic accidents are to be avoided, it will be harder and longer.

However, it may not be possible at all, in which case Nato troops will have to be sent in on the ground. It is understandable that ground forces have not been deployed so far - as a Nato spokesman said this week, even if they had been available, they would not have been sent in yet. But the fact that Nato leaders are holding back from arming the Kosovo Liberation Army, or from preparing for a ground invasion - or from preparing to do either - is increasingly puzzling.

A ground war may turn out not to be necessary, but it should not be ruled out, and it would make more sense to make Milosevic realise that the threat is real.



CLOUD COVER

A strange procedure - but justice was done

WE ARE, as Amnesty International declared yesterday, "one major step closer to justice", with the Home Secretary's decision to allow extradition proceedings against General Pinochet to go ahead. One more "major step" closer to justice than is strictly necessary, in fact.

Jack Straw is, rightly, playing the part of Desk Sergeant Sticker to the hilt. This is one case that has to be done by the book, even if it does require Mr Straw to assert with a straight face that he is "satisfied that he took this decision with an open mind" and "has considered the matter entirely afresh". Just as American juries are told to disregard inadmissible evidence, Mr Straw told himself to ignore the fact that he had already given the go-ahead for extradition after the first, flawed ruling by the Law Lords.

All of which neatly illustrates the absurdity of ministers acting in a "quasi-judicial capacity". In this case in particular, there is nothing "quasi" about it. Extradition is an entirely judicial business, and the idea that politicians should be involved as a matter of procedure is long out of date.

That, however, is for another day. For now, it is enough that the new international law to bring torturers to justice is being followed in a manner that is safe from legal challenge. What matters is that if Mr Straw had been acting purely as a politician, he would have reached the same judgement. It is right that Pinochet should go to Spain to face trial, and the Conservatives who have popped up to say that the Chileans should deal with him are wrong.

The idea that a trial in Chile would help the process of national reconciliation on which the country is embarked in its post-Pinochet phase is unconvincing. Far better for him to be tried in Spain: then the pro-Pinochet half of Chile can blame the Spanish, while the anti-Pinochet half can give thanks that the old tyrant has finally been brought to book.

The law and Ms Jones

IT IS a pity - although perhaps not for Fiona Jones, the MP - that there is not going to be a by-election in Newark. It promised an intriguing contest. With William Hague seemingly going nowhere and the Liberal Democrats starting a poor third, how would Newark's voters send the traditional message of insubordination to the Government? How would the pro-euro Tories fare? We shall never find out, because the Appeal Court has ruled that Ms Jones is not guilty of fraud in recording her electoral expenses.

The point on which she got off, however, merely confirms the need for reform of the law on election funding. The jury, it was held, had been misdirected on the distinction between spending to promote Ms Jones as an individual candidate and spending to promote the Labour Party. By the time of the next general election, the rules to regulate spending must catch up with the 20th century, if not the 21st.

Not their natural stance, but Straw and Byers are doing the right thing

SO GENERAL Pinochet will not be on the next plane out to Chile, and Rupert Murdoch is not to be Manchester United's next owner.

When these two stories broke in the early autumn only the most reckless of gamblers would have put money on this cautious Labour Government taking the progressives' line in both cases. When Murdoch waved his millions in the direction of Old Trafford most informed opinion assumed that the club would be his. Similarly, ever since Pinochet began his pampered incarceration in Britain, acres of print have confidently predicted an early return to his country.

Both cases have been uniquely awkward for the Government, as they demanded clear-cut decisions within a rigid timescale that threatened to alienate influential parts of the still-broad New Labour coalition.

This is not the way Blairites like to do business. Awkward coalition-busting decisions are either postponed - the single currency, electoral reform, transport policies that might hit those poor old middle-England car-owners - or modified in such a way as to keep both sides almost happy.

The right to roam? Give the ramblers a statutory right, but appoint a leading opponent as chair of the Countryside Agency. The minimum wage? Introduce the measure, but at a low enough rate to keep the CBI, previously a fierce opponent, on board.

On Pinochet and Murdoch on the other hand there was no third way. Nor could ministers rule that both would be best dealt with once the next general election was safely out of the way.

The decisions illustrate that even the newest of New Labour ministers, Jack Straw and Stephen Byers, can dance to the progressives' beat. When the chips are down, they are utterly different beasts to the Conservatives who preceded them. A Tory home secretary would have sent Pinochet packing long ago, while under a Conservative government Murdoch would already be looking forward to his first FA cup final as the authorised new owner of the club.

Even so, neither decision can be taken as a sign that the Government's consensual Third Way is about to be replaced. The Government on both occasions made the politically safest decisions, which happened also to be the more progressive. For both Straw and Byers would have risked far greater uproar by going the other way.

On Pinochet the instinctive reaction of New Labour was on show from the beginning. Peter Mandelson showed unguarded delight at the dictator's arrest, in a BBC interview the day after. Straw himself had led student demonstrations against his most prominent prisoner in the Sixties. Even so, if the fate of the General had been entirely in the hands of this Government he might have been sent home.

America made clear its disapproval of the extradition. The Sun strongly opposed it, as did other influential right-wing papers.

If ministers had been forced to stick their heads above the parapet and take on their powerful allies in the United States and The Sun without any outside ammunition, the out-



STEVE RICHARDS
Murdoch does not blame the Government for his failure to become the owner of Manchester United

come might well have been different. But the Law Lords provided the ammunition to reinforce ministerial instinct. Admittedly the Law Lords handed Straw much less ammunition in their second judgment, by sharply narrowing the scope of torture-related crimes for which the dictator could be charged. But Spain has supplied evidence of many more torture cases which had been allegedly committed after the new cut-off date of 1988.

The principle behind Straw's original decision to extradite was not challenged by the Law Lords' revised judgment.

Straw would have become embroiled in a huge political row had he reversed his earlier decision, even if he had attracted the fleeting congratulations of The Sun and Lady Thatcher. What is more, it is quite pos-

sible that Pinochet would still have faced trial in London, a situation more fraught with political tension than sending him off to Spain. In a tight corner Straw took the least turbulent option available to him.

Superficially the Murdoch case seems even more nightmarish, but it turned into a piece of cake for the Government. It has always been far too glib to suggest that when Murdoch clicks his fingers Blair delivers. For a start, Murdoch himself is not daft enough to expect or demand total subservience.

In this case, the Government, which likes to portray itself as a friend of football fans, was never going to cave in without considerable thought and calculation. These considerations would have included the fact that the relationship with the Murdoch press is, more precisely, The Sun - The Sunday Times and The Times, it is often forgotten, follow a right-wing agenda and are often hostile to the Government. Blair's tentative support for the euro has seen to that.

But there will have been a wider calculation. While the Government is so popular, there is little chance that Murdoch will shift his alliance to the Conservatives.

As with the Law Lords and Pinochet, the Government had a shield in the form of the Monopolies and Mergers Commission. The moment the case was placed in their hands some of its sting was removed. For Byers to have overturned the Commission's recommendation would have reinforced the stereotype of

craven government kneeling at Murdoch's empire. The easier political choice was to block the deal.

Those who anticipate the appearance of Blair on The Sun's front page as an upside-down stuffed parrot are in for a disappointment. Doubtless the paper will try to stuff him in a number of ways when, or if, the euro campaign intensifies. But I hear that Murdoch does not blame the Government for his failure to become Manchester United's owner. Instead he is venting his ire on those at BSkyB who blew it. The relationship between Blair and Murdoch will endure, while the fans should be grateful that the Government blocked the bid.

In a Government as political as this one, ministerial reflections in advance of their decisions will have ranged widely. This is a Government that is progressive when it is popular to be so, daring only when it has to be. Jack Straw and Stephen Byers had to be daring, but they chose ways which would be the least unpopular.

No matter, both of them came to the right decisions. Torture is torture whether it took place before or after 1988. An empire's dominance of football and its coverage in the media was obviously anti-competitive, as the Monopolies and Mergers Commission declared.

Quite right, too, that two pragmatic, cautious politicians have given pause for thought both to a former dictator and to the most powerful media magnate in the world.

The writer is political editor of the New Statesman

AS FINANCE Minister, Anwar wanted to keep Malaysia's markets open, even if that meant interest rates would rise. That was anathema to Dr Mahathir, who was proud of Malaysia's spectacular growth under his rule. Mr Anwar, until then the likely successor to the Prime Minister, showed himself ready not only to defend his economic policies but to challenge Dr Mahathir's leadership. In this essentially political struggle, Dr Mahathir is still on

top. But the cost to Malaysia's economic, political and judicial institutions is yet to be counted. *Sydney Morning Herald*

THE SIX-year sentence is not particularly heavy in the circumstances of the whole affair. The indisputable fact is that in the country itself, sympathy is overwhelmingly not in Anwar's favour; popular concern being more for national stability, than in what really amounts to a vicious power struggle at the

MONITOR

ALL THE NEWS OF THE WORLD
Comment on the sentencing of Anwar Ibrahim to six years in prison

very top with Anwar losing out. Whatever the future development in this affair, Malaysia will not be the same again. *Hong Kong Standard*

Anwar is counting on a victory of the coalition of opposition parties to propel him back to power. A win could result in his obtaining a pardon and being installed as PM. That scenario is anchored on the premise that everything is dandy with the coalition. It is not. *Straits Times, Singapore*

IT IS impossible to know whether the young Malaysians Anwar courts will pass judgement in his favour at the next

elections. In most countries in our region citizens back moves towards democracy. Anwar's trial emphasised the position of Mahathir who is the last of a breed of Southeast Asian rulers, convinced his autocratic style of cronyism and patronage is best for his country. Anwar has emerged once from prison to become a national figure. With elections coming, and democracy in the air, he could just do it again. *Bangkok Post, Thailand*

QUOTE OF THE DAY
"This is a vindictive political act. He has placed his ambitions above his duties."
Baroness Thatcher, on Jack Straw's decision to extradite General Pinochet

THOUGHT FOR THE DAY
"No people do so much harm as those who go about doing good."
Mondell Creighton, former Bishop of London

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PANDORA

THE SWORD of truth has been sheathed. Conservatives in Thanet South have chosen Mark MacGregor to win back the seat lost by the former "sleaze" minister Jonathan Aitken at the last election. MacGregor's curriculum vitae is formidable. At the moment he is busy co-ordinating the Tory campaign for this year's plethora of elections. In days gone by, his activities were even more futile. As chairman of the Federation of Conservative Students, MacGregor oversaw an organisation whose members espoused decriminalising incest, legalising hard drugs and privatising the Royal Family, and which claimed that Harold Macmillan was a war criminal. MacGregor himself was one of several extreme Tories who campaigned against the Anglo-Irish agreement in 1986 and was at the forefront of rehousing charges that the FCS had been involved in violence and vandalism at a university conference in Loughborough. All glamorous stuff, but in the end even Norman Tebbit thought the FCS too right-wing; he gave them a dose of their beloved capital punishment and chopped them off. Come back Jonathan, all is forgiven.

LIFE'S BITTER ironies. As Home Secretary Jack Straw sanctioned the extradition process against General Pinochet, a book about the corruption of justice in Chile was banned in Santiago. *The Black Book of Chilean Justice* managed only a day on the bookshelves before Servando Jordán, a former president of the supreme court and with a starring role in the book, successfully moved a writ against it. The author, Alejandra Matos, has, as they say, left the building.

LAUNCHED THIS week was the Channel 5 website, complete with a cartoon not-so-lookalike of the presenter Melinda Messenger (pictured). Only trouble was, those eager to surf's waters had to relog their software to get a picture. Sound familiar?

MEANWHILE, The US supreme David Elstein has switched channels on his long-held belief that the BBC should be funded by subscription. Conveniently, for the man who wants to take over from John Birt as Director-General of the Beeb, his about-turn in favour of the licence fee was screened at a forum of BBC governors this week. Having

achieved this nice hit of PR, Elstein, it may be safe to assume, is confident of his chances – so confident, in fact, that some say he has even forgotten to put in his application form and is simply waiting for the phone to ring.

"WE ARE a grandmother." Congrats to Pandora reader Shirley Williams, who is now a granny. "The hardest part of the birth was keeping her out of the delivery room," quipped the feisty baroness's son-in-law about the arrival of the sweet-natured baby Samuel Honey.

LAUNCHED THIS week, the smoker-friendly business card by Forest, the smokers' pressure group. Wheezers everywhere can now ingratiate themselves with non-smoking establishments by leaving a card that reads: "To the manager: sorry, but I won't be recommending your business to my friends and colleagues because your ban on smoking gets right up my nose." Fiery stuff.

ONE MAN who will be pleased by Manchester United's epic FA Cup victory this week is the Welsh nationalist leader Dafydd Wigley. The Plaid Cymru politician has supported the Red Devils since his time at Manchester University in the Sixties. Any guilt that Dafydd may have about not supporting Wrexham or Swansea is at least partly erased by the fact that Ryan Giggs – who scored the killer goal against Arsenal – is Welsh.

WINNER OF Pandora's sancer of milk this lap is that ageing club kid James St James. He's written a spectacularly vitriolic book called *Disco Bloodbath*, published today by Sceptre, about the notorious Michael Alig night-club murder.

Brit interest will probably centre on St James's scathing allegations about Peter Gatien, the flamboyant night-club proprietor who created the Lancelotti in London's Shaftesbury Avenue. For legal reasons we can't go into details here. But James does describe Alig, when he betrays Gatien by trying to frame him on racketeering charges, as "a grizzled old she-hag... hither and lonely as a withered stick of rhubarb". Miao!

Contact Pandora by e-mail: pandora@independent.co.uk

The Lords take leave of reality



PHILIP HENSHER

They may be getting on but the idea that 16-year-old boys are innocent is extraordinary

sexual orientation were something that could be influenced by government legislation, a government might come to the view that it would prefer to encourage heterosexuality, as it might prefer to encourage, say, cycling in the inner cities. But sexual orientation is not something susceptible to influence of this sort: hardly anyone ever has to make a decision between one

thing or the other, or to do more than come to terms with what is there.

The crucial point about a legislation that treats different orientations as equal in value is that it encourages people to think of homosexuality and heterosexuality as equally deserving of respect. Anyone who defends a law which enshrines their conviction that certain classes of people – not just ways of life, but people – are inferior in value to others ought to pause for a moment. They are on the same side as the Ku Klux Klan.

A great deal of guff was spoken about the protection of our children and the rights of parents. Only yesterday *The Daily Telegraph* printed a letter that ran, in total: "We have grandsons aged 13, 12, 9 and 7. I thank God on my knees for the present House of Lords." Oh, right, I mean, as if, when you are 16, the preferences of your grandfathers are of the slightest interest to you. What if one of those grandsons is now homosexual? What does he deserve more – a rule of law that protects his grandfather's right to bigotry and hatred, or one that has no interest in passing judgement on

a way of life he never had to choose?

The wishes of parents and grandparents are of no importance in the end, and, even if they were, the law could do nothing at all to reinforce them. It is right for the law to tell parents that, at some point, the lives of their children become their own, and that is exactly what the age of consent legislation ought to do.

Some of the arguments advanced by the awful gang led by Lady Young, the voice of every taxi-driver in the country, were almost amusing in their lack of contact with reality. The conviction that 16 was far too young an age for sexual experience was upheld by almost every one of them. Well, I know they're getting on a bit, but the idea that 16-year-old boys are innocent in any way is extraordinary. Have these people never seen a class of 16-year-olds? Do they really suppose that the law has the slightest power to prevent them from doing to each other exactly what they want to do?

And it's right, really, that they should be allowed to. If no one were permitted to have a sexual relationship until they were mature enough to do so, most people would

have to wait a very long time. At some point, the law has to admit that people should have the freedom to behave as they want to. If it prefers to strike a pose – to say, as it did until a couple of years ago, that 20-year-old men must not have sex with each other – it will not achieve its aim; it will simply inculcate a wide-ranging contempt for the rule of law in a generation of people.

It is really difficult to think of anything more irresponsible than the behaviour of the Lords over this. Of course, they are doing it because they are demob-happy, and know that the Government is going to push the legislation through anyway. But, before evoking their power to throw out a Bill, they should have reflected that, in producing defences of bigotry and hatred, they gave some licence to the queer-bashers and bigots who, at present, see nothing wrong in homophobia.

The protection of the right to sexual expression is not a trivial issue. Behaving as if it were, the House of Lords has blithely damaged a few more lives when it had the chance to put an important measure of protection and caution in place.

It is time to rethink the aims of this savage war



DENIS HEALEY

In one sense Nato has become a biological monstrosity – an organ without a function

FIFTY YEARS ago Nato was born out of the end of the Second World War and the beginning of the Cold War. Its functions were defined by its first Secretary General, Lord Ismay. In a few words, to keep the Americans in, the Russians out and the Germans down.

Since then, the Soviet Union has collapsed and Russia itself is disintegrating. A united Germany has become the most powerful country in Europe and America's closest ally. America itself still keeps forces in Europe but is increasingly conscious of its responsibilities as the world's only global super power. Its commitment to collective security in Europe through Nato is continually challenged in Congress by an odd alliance of isolationists and unilateralists.

In one sense, the end of the Cold War has made Nato a biological monstrosity – an organ without a function. When I asked a bright young officer from Brussels how many people are now working at Nato's HQ he replied: "About 20 per cent". Yet Nato is as valuable as ever. It provides a political and security framework through which the United States can involve its forces in peacekeeping, or peace-making, not only in Central Europe but also in south-eastern Europe, the Mediterranean and the Middle East. The United Nations, which was set up to provide such a framework, has been rendered impotent by the veto of Russia and China.

In recent years Nato has made increasing efforts to develop co-operation with Russia in order to create a new framework for European security – an Organisation for Security and Co-operation in Europe.

However, by accepting Poland, the Czech Republic and Hungary as members, and by opening the prospect of membership to countries in the Baltic and Eastern Europe,

Nato has dangerously undermined its relations with Russia, and strengthened Yeltsin's Communist and nationalist opponents. This process has been aggravated by Nato's decision to intervene in the civil war in Yugoslavia without consulting Moscow.

The bombing of Serbia was particularly offensive to Russia since it took place when Prime Minister Yevgeny Primakov was in fact halfway across the Atlantic for talks in Washington; even liberals such as Yegor Gaidar were appalled. The bombing was against the advice of the US military and was most unwelcome to Yugoslavia's neighbours in Nato, Greece, Italy, and Hungary – which has a large minority in northern Yugoslavia.

Even the Secretary General of Nato has expressed disquiet that there was no serious prior discussion with Nato on the operation's aims or means. It is still unclear whether Nato would be involved in providing land forces in Yugoslavia – and for what purpose.

All observers agree that the bombing has strengthened Milosevic's political position in Yugoslavia

and has led to more savage attacks on the people of Kosovo. Moreover, it has led to the death of innocent civilians in Belgrade and elsewhere – notably on a road convoy of Kosovo Albanian refugees this week.

There is growing disagreement in Washington over the operation's aims and targets; above all, there is no apparent exit strategy.

The best and now the only hope is that Nato may accept the need to engage with Russia in a major attempt to get a peaceful settlement of the Kosovo crisis, even if that means significant changes in Nato's present policy.

However, Nato's forthcoming summit meeting on 23 April may create new difficulties. It may publish a Membership Action Plan for Bulgaria, Romania, Slovakia, Macedonia, Albania and Slovenia, which will be offered earlier membership provided that they modernise their entire armed forces in line with Nato – thus giving them priority over the Baltic States and former Soviet republics.

Moreover, it will open the possibility for Nato action beyond the existing treaty area, including central Asia. Nato has already carried out military exercises in Kazakhstan under American leadership. Nato is also requiring such countries to prepare more actively for participation in some type of a rapid reaction force.

America also wants the Summit to adopt a strategic concept that will include a new commitment to protect common interests and to act jointly against the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction.

President Clinton has said that tomorrow's alliance must defend us against threats to our collective security from beyond Nato's borders, including the spread of weapons of mass destruction, ethnic violence, and regional conflict.

In theory this could open the



Tony Blair and Bill Clinton should look to the future Reuters

way to Nato intervention in the Middle East and in North Africa. This has alarmed some Nato leaders in Europe.

The French Parliamentary Defence Committee has gone much further. In its recent report it declared that last year's American missile strikes on Afghanistan and the Sudan show that Washington was "thumbing its nose at international organisations".

It also made it clear that France would not join any American-led effort to deploy an anti-missile shield in Europe, saying that "it could give the impression that Nato, having lost its enemy to the East, is now looking for one in the South".

Moreover, it added, "installing Nato a few dozen kilometres from St

Petersburg could seriously damage relations with Russia".

In stressing the need for a strong European identity within Nato, the French report argued that this would allow Europe to mount peacekeeping missions alone, if Washington proved reluctant to act.

It is clear that Tony Blair's idea of a European identity on foreign and defence policy may be interpreted differently across the Channel.

Once again Britain's determination to put first its relations with the United States is creating serious problems for its desire to appear at the heart of Europe.

It is high time that Britain used its position in Nato to seek changes in American policy – particularly with regard to Yugoslavia.

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The Tories must be a pro-euro party

THE CRITICAL choice facing this country is now coming to a head. In as little as two-and-a-half years' time, we may well face the moment of truth.

A referendum is to be held that will shape Britain's place in Europe, and our power as a nation in and through Europe, for many decades to come. It is vital, as a European player and indeed as a global player, that we make the right choice for Britain's future.

If the Government recommends UK entry into the single European currency, once the economics of membership are right, I and many other pro-European Conservatives will support the "yes" campaign with enthusiasm.

That is why I have already joined the advisory board of the Britain in Europe campaign as an observer. That is why, as we have signalled, Kenneth Clarke, Michael Heseltine, I – and others – will help launch the full cross-party political campaign later this year, once the European elections are safely out of the way.

Some have criticised us for waiting until the summer. I disagree. We have made it clear

to our party leadership that we believe there are perfectly good left-right issues on which the Euro-election campaign can and should be fought: the social chapter, deregulation, industrial policy, tax harmonisation, spending priorities, and the handling of maladministration and fraud.

This should be the battleground of June's contest. The European Parliament's power has grown decisively. The key issue is who controls that power. This may be – indeed it certainly is – a Euro-election, but it is not – and should not be – an election about the euro. The European Parliament cannot and will not decide whether Britain joins monetary union.

As we believe that the euro is not the issue in June, we do not wish to see the Euro-election converted into a mini-referendum on the single currency. Divisions of opinion about the euro could make or break the Conservative campaign in this election.

Those of us who take a positive view of Britain's future within the eurozone have signalled our desire to make, not break, that campaign – on the



PODIUM

GEOFFREY HOWE
From a speech given by the former Cabinet minister Lord Howe to European Movement's conference, Birmingham

assumption that good sense and a balanced approach will similarly characterise the official Conservative campaign.

That requires a degree of self-discipline and self-restraint to be evidenced on all sides. There is a serious chance that it will be so.

After June, the real battle over EMU will begin. Pro-Europeans of all parties and of none should be under no illusion about the challenge of win-

ning a future referendum. The forces ranged against us are considerable, their financial firepower is impressive, and their arguments, however wrong, are often well put. This will not be an easy fight.

My strong belief is that the Conservative Party can never win power as a euro-hostile party, because it will be a divided party and one bereft of its business base. But this does not mean that the British people can never vote "no" in an EMU referendum. Public opinion is up for grabs.

The attitude of Tony Blair and Gordon Brown will be the critical determinant of how the public reacts. They must show that they want Britain in and intend to lead Britain in, and are actively preparing the nation for this historic change.

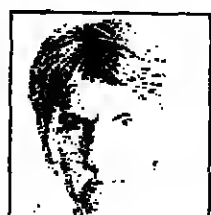
As we have said ever since the Chancellor's statement of October 1997 – in effect ruling out entry or even a referendum in this Parliament – Britain will not join EMU by accident. Getting to a "yes" vote on the euro involves not waiting for the economics to come right, but positively working for them to come right. It involves leading from the front and using scarce

political capital to get the right answer to the most important economic and political question facing our country today.

The National Changeover Plan, announced by the Prime Minister on 23 February, was a start. But it needs to be part of a rising curve of commitment and activity. I believe that Tony Blair did cross a Rubicon on that day – and that now there is no going back. And he did not cross the river just to remain standing on the bank. He signalled – and he will be held to that signal by the Euro-sceptic press – that by the end of his time as Prime Minister, he wants Britain to be in the single currency, as a full and equal partner in the EU.

That is why we pro-European Conservatives, welcoming that aspiration, saw Mr Blair's February statement as significant. To carry the campaign forward requires the Prime Minister and the Chancellor to lead the national campaign for euro-membership, rather than to see this as something organised by others. Just as we shall participate in this campaign from the summer, so must they. I believe they will.

Your future life signposted



STEVE CONNOR

If drug companies sacrifice their rights it must mean something important is going on

WE ARE about to enter a new era in medical science that will almost certainly bring about as profound a change in the way we live and die than anything we have witnessed as a result of 20th-century medicine. For a period that saw the discovery of antibiotics and the implementation of mass immunisation, leading to the near-elimination of many notorious childhood killers, that may appear an outlandish thing to say. Let me explain.

Yesterday, five world-renowned centres of biomedical excellence teamed up with 10 multinational drug companies to form an unprecedented alliance. The aim of the consortium is to discover the genetic "signposts" that could be used by doctors of the 21st century to predict a patient's future susceptibility to disease. Not only that, the signposts could be used to treat patients with tailor-made drugs, specifically designed to combat the disease in question and to prevent side-effects in those with a certain genetic constitution.

The signposts in question are technically known as SNPs, or single nucleotide polymorphisms. They represent the smallest change possible in a gene and, as such, the genetic difference between one person and another is effectively the result of the differences in their SNPs. For every 1,000 "letters" in the genetic alphabet or code of a human gene, there is typically one SNP. This means that two unrelated people have roughly a million SNPs to distinguish between them. The SNPs are known as signposts because they can be strongly associated with a specific disease. They can indicate the inheritance of a conventional genetic disorder, such as cystic fibrosis or haemophilia, and more importantly they can act as a marker or test for other genes that confer a predisposition for more common illnesses, such as cancer, asthma and diabetes. If heart problems run in your family, there is almost certainly a group of as-yet-undiscovered SNPs that could be used to estimate your risk of suffering a heart attack.

In other words, a database of SNPs - a map of the genetic signposts - could tell doctors of the future what a person is likely to die



A scientist studies a series of DNA sequencing autoradiograms, or genetic fingerprints, through a magnifying glass

Geoff Tompkinson/Science Photo Library

of and what must be done to avert the disaster. All that is needed is to compare a patient's genetic profile against a set of known genetic signposts, and, hey presto, get a read-out to reveal not only what a person is likely to die of, but at what age the disease will present itself.

This is not so futuristic as it may seem. Already there is a little-known genetic test that can predict whether a person is likely to develop Alzheimer's disease, and at what age this will most probably occur. Drug companies have an obvious vested interest in the results of such research. But what makes the 15-strong consortium so unusual is that all parties have vowed that, whatever information they gather about these all-important signposts, it will be published straightaway and will be freely available to anyone who wants it. Because the data will be in the public domain, no one will be able to patent the genetic material and so there will be no restrictions on who can take advantage of the information.

Why is this so important for the rest of us? One clue comes from the fact that drug companies, which are notoriously secretive about research, seem prepared to join forces and publish information

openly. It is a mark of the importance they have attached to the huge potential benefits emanating from the international initiative to unravel the entire genetic map of man - the Human Genome Project. If drug companies are prepared to sacrifice their exclusive rights, it must mean something pretty earth-shattering is going on.

An immediate worry of the drug firms is that several smaller companies, which were specifically set up to be the first to discover the genetic signposts for disease, are going to find and patent the material, and so restrict their commercial exploitation. Several outfits, in the US and Europe, are known to be unravelling the genetic sequence of human genes as fast as they can in order to patent the information before anyone else. One such company, Genentech, in Paris, is said to have found and applied for patents on two genetic traits that indicate a predisposition to prostate cancer. It is offering intellectual rights on the patents for a sum said to lie somewhere between £30m and £60m.

The consortium, led by the Wellcome Trust, Britain's largest medical research charity, says it wants to identify about 300,000 genetic signposts, and to map the precise

whereabouts of about half of these on each of the 23 pairs of human chromosomes, over the next two years. This may seem a bold objective, but it in fact represents only 10 per cent of the total number of signposts that are believed to exist. It is, nevertheless, a far bolder attempt to unravel the genetic indicators of disease than anything else going on in the world.

The 10 drug companies have therefore deftly carried out a nice piece of anti-competitive work aimed at frustrating those smaller gene-sequencing operations, while basking in the glory of making everything they discover open and therefore unpatentable. They have realised that there is strong opposition to patenting human genes and have assumed, probably quite rightly, that the effort to place everything in the public domain will be applauded.

Indeed, one vociferous opponent of gene patenting - the Genetic Interest Group, representing families affected by inherited disorders - believes that any form of patenting on parts of the human body, including genes, will discourage rather than encourage research and development. "There are serious ethical and moral objections to

the notion that part of the human body could be patentable. Genes and DNA are natural parts of the human body," the group has ruled.

In fact, the "genes" that form part of a patent are not physically part of a body. They are merely bits of information that can be written down on paper. If someone can use this to invent something - a genetic test, say - then surely they must have the right to protect that invention against plagiarism? The problem, as I see it, comes when the patent is so broad that it stifles research by dissuading others from engaging in work which they think is likely to end up being the subject of a lengthy and costly lawsuit for patent infringement.

This is what lies behind the action of the drug companies which yesterday formed the consortium with five biomedical centres, including Cold Spring Harbor Laboratory, where one of the founding fathers of modern genetics, Jim Watson, holds court. Getting into bed with academics such as Watson - who has always argued for open access to information regarding human genes - was a smart move because it meant that the drug monoliths could argue that they have the saints on their side.

Yesterday's announcement, made in the dying embers of the 20th century, has set the scene for what we are to expect in the years to come. When asked where the technology is likely to end up, Michael Morgan, the head of the Wellcome Trust's initiative to unravel the human genome, gave this honest assessment of the future: "I think the way it will end up is like pregnancy testing. It will first of all be done only in research clinics. It'll then come into a doctor's office, and it'll then become a dipstick in the chemist's."

In the longer term, the use to which the genetic signposts will be put raises far more serious ethical concerns than anything related to the question of patents. For instance, what will it mean for people to be told they are likely to develop an illness for which there is no cure? Some ethicists argue that this sort of information is too dangerous for people to know, but what about third parties, such as insurance companies? You may not want to know you have a 91 per cent chance of developing Alzheimer's disease by the age of 68, but I bet the insurance company offering to take out a post-retirement policy against long-term care would like to know.

RIGHT OF REPLY

AILSA OGILVIE



A director of the charity Scope responds to a recent article by Sue Arnold

SUE ARNOLD'S light-hearted dig at charity fundraising "Does charity begin at the Great Wall of China?", Weekend Review, 10 April 1999 pinpoints the fact that these days it takes a lot more than pure altruism to encourage people to get involved with raising money.

She's right. We don't live in a "something for nothing" culture. The rising popularity of overseas charity fundraising events taps into something many want to get involved in. People like the challenge of getting fit to do tough treks and cycle rides.

But she is wrong to say that sponsoring someone to do such events is financing "what is basically a package holiday with optional excursions". In exchange for the chance to experience the challenge of a lifetime, participants must give a big commitment to help the charity, and significant sums of money have to be raised. Take the example of Scope. The charity raised more than £2m from its overseas events last year alone. This is a vital new source of income.

Of course, there are some participants who can afford to cover the required minimum sponsorship themselves, but the vast majority spend months fundraising in their local communities and raising awareness of what Scope does. This often leads to friends and family wanting to get involved in the future. It is common for much more than the minimum amount to be raised. I can assure your readers that these events are not holidays. Sue Arnold could take part in Scope's Grand Canyon Bike Away or white-water rafting on the Zambezi. This would give first-hand experience of the effort and commitment of people of all ages striving to raise money to fund the vital services we provide to people with cerebral palsy and associated disabilities.

A pattern tie to bind gay authors

AUTOBIOGRAPHIES ARE, by their very nature, individual works. If, however, we look at the autobiographies of people who have in common something as crucially defining as homosexuality, we may be able to draw some general conclusions about sex and society.

Paul Robinson is a cultural historian rather than a literary critic, and although he subjects his 14 texts to close readings and is finely alert to their authors' literary as well as psychological strategies, his principal interest is in the way these books reflect the similarities and differences of homosexual experience, and in the influences exerted on the lives of their authors by history and nationality.

Six of his writers are British, three French, and five American. The oldest was born in 1840, the youngest in



FRIDAY BOOK

GAY LIVES: HOMOSEXUAL AUTOBIOGRAPHY FROM JOHN ADDINGTON SYMONDS TO PAUL MONETTE

BY PAUL ROBINSON. UNIVERSITY OF CHICAGO PRESS. £23.95

1947. Some of their accounts are dispiriting, others are heartening.

"When I began work on this book I had no hypothesis about what general story it might tell," Robinson writes. "And in the end no such story has emerged, or, if one exists, I have failed to detect it."

This may be true, but Robinson has nevertheless been able to trace some patterns. The British writers have "a

fascination with the lower classes"; the French "tend to put their stories through a philosophical wringer"; the Americans are inclined to write "coming-out stories" that "invite comparison with the conversion narratives that figure so prominently in the Western cultural tradition".

He detects a concern with masculinity and effeminacy in all the stories, and discusses notions of "solidarity" - not merely the political solidarity that came out of the postwar liberation movement, but also the tribal loyalties referred to in the title of Christopher Isherwood's *Christopher and His Kind*.

Some of these books were like messages in bottles, unpublished during writers' lives but left for posterity. The most extreme case is JA Symonds, whose autobiography did not appear until 91 years after his death - an astonishing Victorian document to unleash upon the Eighties. While Symonds and Goldworthy Lowes Dickinson felt that their stories would be of interest and benefit to others of their kind, and perhaps to society at large, neither makes particularly cheering reading.

Similarly, Robinson's three Frenchmen are hardly role-models: Andre Gide escaping the confines of marriage to pursue Arab boys, Jean Genet abasing himself before assorted thugs, and Julien Green dividing his time between "writing his Pamphlet against the Catholics in France - which celebrates the Inquisition and attacks

modern Catholicism for its moral laxity - and squalid nights cruising near the Trocadero".

As Robinson notes: "The history of gay autobiography in France confounds our naive expectation that the genre should move inexorably towards self-affirmation."

Robinson has arranged his material skilfully. For example, he discusses J.R. Ackerley's *My Father and Myself* in tandem with Quentin Crisp's *The Naked Civil Servant*. He notes that although the two books are "set in the same town at more or less the same time... the worlds Ackerley and Crisp inhabited and the lives they pursued seem so alien from one another as to constitute virtually separate universes".

Two Americans, Jeb Alexander and Donald Vining, representing the Twenties and the Forties, also produce a piquant contrast. Alexander narrates "a descent into loneliness, despair and drunken inertia" in Washington, while Vining "moves in the direction of ever-greater assurance, contentment and activity" in New York.

Occasionally, such groupings for effect seem a little unfair. A distinctly uncharitable discussion of the waveringly bisexual Stephen Spender's *World Within World* is sandwiched between much friendlier analyses of the absolutely queer Isherwood's *Loans and Shadows* and Christopher and His Kind. Robinson correctly notes that *Loans and Shadows* "is ingeniously contrived to be perceived differently by two different imagined audiences: the general public, which is properly heterosexual, and an audience of sympathetic conspirators, essentially homosexual, who will respond with recognition and pleasure to the author's carefully coded secret history".

However, he derives no such pleasure from Spender's book, which is more open about the author's homo-



Quentin Crisp: among the authors studied

Gayle Kent

sexuality. Robinson merely finds it dishonest and evasive.

On the whole, Robinson is a reliable and entertaining guide. He writes lucidly, avoiding jargon even when writing about the "essentialist" and "social constructionist" views of homosexuality. Unlike Julien Green, who "can hardly bring himself to describe any part of the body below the neck", Robinson is amusingly forthright about sex. I particularly enjoyed his observation that Andrew Tobias, author of *The Best Little Boy in the World*, "took it for granted that he needed to work on his sexual skills. His determination to do better reflects a typically American devotion to self-improvement."

PETER PARKER

Kosova children appeal to Independent readers

Thousands of Kosovar refugee children now face death from hunger, cold and disease. Most are in deep shock. Many have witnessed their parents and relatives killed in the awful atrocities from which they fled. Albania, the poorest country in Europe, cannot support this massive influx of refugees.



Your action will save children who have lost everything

The European Children's Trust needs your swift response to expand our emergency centre in northern Albania to help thousands of refugees. Our team has been working with displaced Kosovar families since this tragedy began. We are ready to provide food, medical aid and clothing to the confused and frightened children who arrive daily.

These are children and families whose homes have been lost, perhaps forever. Special help is needed for the traumatised children who have witnessed terrible crimes, and must now start to live a normal life.

£30 could buy emergency medicine and food for 5 Kosovar refugee children for a week.

Kosovo Emergency Appeal, The European Children's Trust, FREEPOST KB369, 64c Queen Street, London, EC4B 4AP.

Please send what you can to save the displaced Kosovar children. Call 0800 056 3686 now or cut the coupon below

I enclose ☐ £30 ☐ my choice £_____ to save Kosovar children. (Cheques to The European Children's Trust please).

Or debit my Access/Visa/CAF card:

Card no _____ Expiry date _____

Signature _____ Date _____

Mr/Mrs/Ms _____

Address _____

Postcode _____

Telephone no _____

Please return to: Don McCreedy, (14), Kosovo Emergency Appeal, The European Children's Trust, FREEPOST KB369, 64c Queen Street, London, EC4B 4AP. Or call 0800 056 3686 NOW.

Please act NOW - your gift will save lives



Anthony Newley

ONE OF Britain's most distinctive talents, Anthony Newley was an actor, singer, composer and writer who had his first starring role in films at the age of 16, composed hit musicals and songs, topped the hit parade himself as a pop star, played everything from romantic leads to quirky character roles in movies, starred on both the West End and Broadway stages, and became a favourite of cabaret audiences from New York to Las Vegas.

His elongated Cockney vowel sounds made his voice an unmistakable one which people either loved or hated. It served him well on novelty songs such as "Pop Goes the Weasel", but he was also a fine ballad singer. "What Kind of Fool Am I", "Who Can I Turn To" and "Candy Man" were just three of the hit songs he co-wrote. "I'm not a trained musician or singer," he once said, "but I can turn out a song."

Born in Hackney, east London, in 1931, he left school at the age of 14. "The saddest thing about myself," he later said, "is that I never read a book. I never got the habit." He was working as an office boy for an insurance company when he spotted a newspaper advertisement reading "Boy Actors Urgently Wanted". Said Newley later, "Suddenly the bell rang! I applied to the advertisers, the Italia Conti Stage School, only to discover the fees were too high." The school agreed to let him audition, however ("I had to read poems to two sweet old ladies who were charmed with my cockney accent"), and were impressed enough to offer him free tuition and a salary of 30 shillings a week as an office boy. The producer Geoffrey de Barquis spotted Newley at the school and gave him the leading role in a children's film serial, *The Adventures of Dusty Bates* (1947).

Newley was already displaying a distinctly individual style of agreeably knowing confidence, and after another children's film, *The Little Ballerina* (1947), he was given the plum role of a boy who magically changes places with his own father in *Vice Versa* (1947), directed by Peter Ustinov. Ustinov recently said, "I was amazed at how convincing Anthony Newley was as someone with an old mind inside him." One of the stars of the film was Kay Walsh, whose ex-husband David Lean was about to direct a screen version of *Oliver Twist*. Walsh rang Lean and told him, "I've found your Artful Dodger," and Newley's superbly insolent and cheeky performance became one of the many reasons that the 1948 film became a classic.

Given a contract by the Rank Organisation, the actor then settled into a comfortable niche as a character player, often as cocky cockneys, in such films as *Here Come the Huggetts* (1948), during the filming of which the actor later claimed to have lost his virginity to Diana Dors. *The Guinea Pig* (1948) and *A Boy, a Girl and a Bike* (1949), but when Rank dropped him after a year his film career faltered and he spent some time in repertory. Later he played chippy enlisted men in war films including *Above Us the Waves* (1955), *The Bat-*

tle of the River Plate (1955) and *Cockleshell Heroes* (1955).

It was in 1956 that he was able to display just how versatile he was when he starred with Annie Ross in the musical revue *Cronks* at the small club theatre the New Watergate. This off-beat, almost surreal show proved a hit and transferred to the West End, to St Martin's Theatre, in March 1956, where it had a successful run before going to Broadway, where it fared less well. Newley's engaging rendition of such numbers as "I'm the Boy (You Should Say Yes To)" contributed greatly to the show's charm, and in 1956 he toured England with his own variety show.

A turning point came with a literally star-making role in the low-budget musical film *Idle on Parade* (1959) in which Newley played a rock 'n' roll star inducted into the Army (in America the film was called *Idle on Parade*). One of his numbers in the film, "I've Waited So Long" (composed by Jerry Lordan) became a pop sensation and overnight Newley found himself a teenage heart-throb. In 1960 he had seven records in the charts, including Lloyd Price and Harold Logan's "Personality" and two No 1 hits, the wistful "Why," by Robert Marcucci, and Peter de Angelis and Lionel Bart's "Do You Mind".

'I don't hate anybody or anything. But I do expect to make statements about the problems of being a human being'

Newley surprised his public again when in 1960 he made his first record album, *Love Is a Now and Then Thing*, a beautiful set of ballads such as "This Time the Dream's on Me" and "I Get Along Without You Very Well" which he handled with appealing sensitivity. Never one to embrace the conventional, Newley next starred in a television series which, though short-lived, is remembered as one of the most avant-garde in television history. *The Strange World of Gurney Slade* (1960) was a bizarre show in which the central character (named by Newley after the Somerset village of the same name) talked to animals and inanimate objects, heard what people were thinking, had conversations with people who could not see him, and moved in and out of reality. Though written by Sid Green and Dick Hills, its concept was doubtless embraced and heavily influenced by the star.

Newley next fulfilled a long-standing ambition to star in his own stage musical, and fortuitously began a partnership with the com-

poser and author Leslie Bricusse. Newley was later to tell an American columnist, "I'm the laziest son-of-a-bitch who ever drew a breath. I sleep till one and I'm always surprised when someone in blue rinse on a talk show says, 'You're a genius.' Mr Newley, you do so many things." Tony Newley never realised his potential, did the things he should have done. That's why I need Leslie Bricusse - he has plenty of ambition."

With Bricusse, Newley wrote the book and score of *Stop the World I Want To Get Off*, in which Newley starred as Littlechap, an Everyman figure whose whole life is depicted in the show. Newley said, "The role of Littlechap, surrounded by the type of chorus once used in Greek drama, has presented us with a challenge which any cast would surely enjoy tackling." Directed by Newley, the show opened at the Queen's Theatre in July 1961 and was a smash hit, its songs including "What Kind of Fool Am I", "Gonna Build a Mountain" (a hit record for Matt Monro) and "Once in a Lifetime". Sammy Davis was one of many who recorded the songs - he became a close friend of Newley and a great champion of the Newley-Bricusse catalogue.

When Newley was asked why most of his songs became hit records for other singers, he replied, "Sammy Davis, Andy Williams, Tony Bennett... their records sell in the millions; when I do it, it just trickles. But for the composer and lyricist there's a tidy bit to be made that way too, so I don't really mind." "What Kind of Fool Am I" won the 1962 Grammy Award as song of the year and has been recorded by over 70 vocalists, though Newley's own recording ran into trouble because he sang the word "damn" - he later made another recording which could be played on sensitive radio stations.

In 1962 *Stop the World* moved to Broadway where, produced by David Merrick who had bought the American rights while it had been trying out in Nottingham ("I felt no need to wait and see if it would be a hit in London - I had been thoroughly entertained and absorbed by the freshness of conception shown by its authors"), it ran for over 500 performances. Both the London and New York productions were directed by Newley, of whom Merrick was to write, "I have no doubts at all that Mr Newley is going to enjoy widespread and durable success in America. The man does everything - he acts well; he sings with individuality and verve; and most importantly, he is an exceptionally important performer. His personality is dynamic and he projects a brilliance of spirit."

During the show's run in 1963 Newley, who had previously been wed to Tiller Gitt-turned-actress Ann Lynn, married Joan Collins. "Like most men of my generation," he said, "I had drooled over pictures of Joan. And there she was, backstage at *Stop the World* and I could not believe it. Did I ask her for a date? Yes I did." Collins described Newley at the time as "a half-Jewish Cockney git" and herself as



Newley with Joan Collins. 'I had drooled over pictures of Joan,' he said. They married in 1963

"a half-Jewish princess from Bayswater via Sunset Boulevard".

The following year the Bricusse-Newley team had a big hit with their lyrics to John Barry's music for *Goldfinger*, sung over the titles of the James Bond film by Shirley Bassey. The next Newley-Bricusse musical, *The Road of the Gypsies* - *The Small of the Crowd*, "a comic allegory about the class system in contemporary Britain", had a better score than its predecessor but its 1964 tryout in Nottingham, starring Norman Wisdom and directed by Newley, did not prove satisfactory and it failed to reach London. David Merrick was again impressed, and offered to take it to Broadway if Newley would assume the leading role.

Co-starring Cyril Ritchard (representing the "haves" to Newley's down-trodden "have-nots"), the show received mixed reviews for its libretto's pretensions ("third-rate commerce masquerading as art," said Walter Kerr of the *Herald-Tribune*), but unanimous praise for the songs and performances. Whitney Bolton wrote in the *Morning*

Telegraph: "Mr Newley uses his own inventions, plus deliberate and useful, justifiably purloined gestures common to Charlie Chaplin, Lupino Lane, Buster Keaton, Stan Laurel and others, as though giving us a portrait gallery of great comics who have made their names as Little Men about the harsh world."

The score ("bursting with songs, all good and several of high quality," wrote *Variety*) was exceptional, its hits including "Who Can I Turn To" (already a hit record by Tony Bennett when the show opened), "A Wonderful Day Like Today", "The Joker", "Nothing Can Stop Me Now", "Look at That Face" and "Sweet Beginning". The original cast album sold over 100,000 copies, and the show ran for over eight months. Newley and Bricusse were nominated for the Tony Award for Best Score, and Newley was nominated for Best Director, but this was the year that *Fiddler on the Roof* took most of the major musical awards. Asked about his predilection for writing about the problems of the "Little Man", Newley replied, "I

don't hate anybody or anything. But I do expect to make statements about the problems of being a human being."

Newley made his American film debut with a leading role in the film *Doctor Dolittle* (1967), with Bricusse alone providing the songs, though Newley made a fine solo album of the score. The actor then starred with Sandy Dennis in *Sweet November* (1968), a sentimental but rarely mawkish tale of a dying girl who takes a different sweetheart every month.

Newley's own marriage was under pressure and in 1969 he produced, directed and co-wrote *Can Hieronymus Merkin Ever Forget Mercy Hump and Find True Happiness?*, co-starring Collins and with plainly autobiographical overtones. "A zany erotobiography that looks like a Marx Brothers' movie shot in a nudist camp," was *Playboy's* description of the film, which was not a success. For the score, Newley collaborated with Herbert Kretzmer, who became a lifelong friend.

"Although I was the lyricist, the film's concept and the ideas for the

songs were Newley's - he was the architect and I the builder," said Kretzmer. One of the songs they wrote, "When You Gotta Go," was for a time a staple of Barbra Streisand's stage act. Newley and Collins were divorced in 1970, and Newley's third marriage, to an air hostess, Dareth Rich, also ended in divorce. "My only regret is that in a show-business career you can have no private life," said Newley.

He and Bricusse wrote the songs for the 1971 film fantasy *Willy Wonka & the Chocolate Factory*, including the hit "Candy Man". In 1972 he returned to the West End stage with *The Good Old Bad Old Days*, which had book, music and lyrics by Newley and Bricusse and direction by Newley. Despite a tenuous score and a personal success, the show had only a moderate run and Newley began to spend more time in the United States, where he had bought a house and had developed a large following. In 1974 he starred with Henry Mancini in a musical revue on Broadway, and he became a top night-club entertainer with sell-out appearances in Las Vegas. His last major film was *Mister Quip* (1976), for which he wrote both music and lyrics, though he made several television movies.

In 1985 he was diagnosed with cancer and had one kidney removed. Returning to England, he moved in with his mother Grace in Esher, Surrey. With his illness arrested, he continued to work, appearing in television shows, touring in a stage production of Leslie Bricusse's musical *Scrooge*, and last year playing a successful London cabaret engagement. On television he played an amorous used-car dealer in several episodes of *EastEnders*.

For the last seven years his partner was Gina Fratini, but he was a valued friend to all those close to him and he had remained on good terms with both Joan Collins and Dareth Rich - Collins would be seen at all of Newley's London openings. Herbert Kretzmer said of Newley, "It's a hackneyed phrase I know, but Newley was truly a 'one-off', a totally unique and original talent." Leslie Bricusse echoed these sentiments when he wrote, "Never once have I known Tony to falter for one moment in his perpetual quest for something original - to say things and do things in a new way - to find fresh excitement, even in old themes. He takes infinite pains to bring style and originality to everything he touches." "He was a true original," said Kretzmer, "driven by the need to innovate and contemptuous of repetition or the following of fashion. His wish was always to break boundaries and push frontiers back."

TOM VALLANCE

George Anthony Newley, actor, singer, composer and writer: born London 24 September 1931; married 1956 Ann Lynn (marriage dissolved); 1963 Joan Collins (one son, one daughter; marriage dissolved 1970); thirdly Dareth Rich (one son, one daughter; marriage dissolved); died Jensen Beach, Florida 14 April 1999.

Nicola Trussardi

NICOLA TRUSSARDI was one of the generation that led the renaissance in Italian style during the 1970s and 1980s, when small family enterprises mushroomed into huge fashion and accessories empires. His contemporaries, designers and business entrepreneurs like himself, put Italian fashion on the map. Their design, production and marketing acumen transformed a cottage industry into a global business.

As a result of Nicola Trussardi's dedication and tenacious spirit, Trussardi is one of the most familiar names of Italy's luxury fashion brands. He was a man of ambition and recognised that the family business of glove-making - founded in Bergamo, outside Milan, by his grandfather Dante Trussardi in 1910 - was going nowhere during the young fashion boom of the Sixties. "Gloves were a thing of the past," he remembered, "rendered obsolete by the socio-cultural revolution... and I had two options before me: either turn my hand to something else, or try and rebuild the business, to preserve and update the good family name that had been acquired over the years."

Nicola Trussardi was born in Bergamo in 1942 and, having graduated in economic and commercial sciences from the Catholic University in Milan, entered the family business in 1970 on the sudden death of his father and brother. He began transforming the business by venturing into fashion at about the same time that young designers like Gianni Versace, Giorgio Armani, Gianfranco Ferré and the Missonis were beginning to make their mark.

The house tried hard to become part of the hip and trendy ready-to-wear movement, but the results were a bit hit-and-miss. However,



its leather fashion and accessories were a huge success. Nicola Trussardi introduced ranges of watches, jewellery, shoes, bags, luggage and belts all bearing the familiar sleek greyhound logo, and by 1998 sales had reached about \$48m in 118 Trussardi boutiques around the world. More recently Trussardi launched the T Store and a jeans line designed by the Paris-based American designer Jeremy Scott.

Nicola Trussardi remained fascinated, though, with the processes of leather-making and modernised the fine glove-making skills of his atelier, developing new and sophisticated techniques for working leather that gave opportunities to expand into new fields. Home furnishings, aircraft and helicopter interiors all display the imprint of the Trussardi style. He worked with Lancia, Leyland and Alfa Romeo and launched a range of expensive leather-finished bicycles and Velobikes. In the early 1990s he expanded the business to invest in banks, real estate companies and chemical industries, and

He was like a modern-day Renaissance princeling. Pavarotti called him 'the greatest ambassador of "Made in Italy" in the world'

set up joint ventures in the United States, Europe and Japan.

He was a dynamic and focused businessman and kept a tight rein on the company, controlling every aspect of the business from finance to design and advertising campaigns. "Few people are so sincerely involved in every aspect of their work as Nicola Trussardi," says the fashion photographer Steven Klein. "It was great to collaborate with a designer who was so readily available to the photographer and so willing to take chances." Trussardi was charming, highly regarded by his staff, good at media relations and conscientious if a problem had to be solved.

Trussardi enjoyed a life surrounded by beautiful things and powerful friends, and was a close friend of the former Italian premier Bettino Craxi before he was toppled in corruption scandals in the early 1990s. Trussardi was once described by Luciano Pavarotti as "one of the best ambassadors of 'Made in Italy' in the world. All his creations are characterised by great

taste, great style, especially in choice of materials."

He owned a Renaissance villa at Bergamo and enjoyed sailing near his home on the tiny-isle of Elba, off the Tuscan coast. The house, designed by a pupil of Le Corbusier, was filled with a fine collection of modern art including works by Magritte and De Chirico. There he entertained Pavarotti, Umberto Eco, Queen Noor of Jordan, Tina Turner and Robert Altman. He made a guest appearance as himself in Altman's 1994 fashion movie *Prêt-à-Porter*.

Like a modern-day Renaissance princeling he had a passion for the arts and transformed a former hotel, the Palazzo Marino alla Scala, into the company headquarters, with a museum and art gallery on the upper floor. He was keen to raise cultural awareness and hosted exhibitions of work by Picasso, Allan Jones and Van Gogh, and photography by Dennis Hopper, Eve Arnold and Robert Mapplethorpe. His interest in the arts spread to music when he participated in a festival dedicated to Paganini at the Hermitage Museum in St Petersburg in 1985 and jointly sponsored a Pavarotti and Friends concert for the charity War Child the following year.

His death came as a result of an accident when he was driving home to Bergamo after the private view of a new exhibition in his gallery on Monday. His car went out of control on a road exit ramp and crashed at high speed.

FRANCESCA FEARON

Nicola Trussardi, fashion designer and businessman: born Bergamo, Italy 17 June 1942; married Maria Luisa Gavazzoni (two sons, two daughters); died Milan 14 April 1999.

Garth Robinson

GARTH ROBINSON was a biochemist at Oxford University for over 30 years, who became briefly, in the early Eighties, a national hero for his progressive policies on lawn mowing. "Why bother with a mower?" called the newspaper headlines.

Robinson joined a lively, if individualistic, department in 1965, where he carried out research into kidney basement membranes and their relevance to nephritis, the inflammation of the kidneys. He became involved in the development of artificial membranes, which mimicked filter membranes outside the body, allowing the testing of various agents that could damage the kidney. At a time when many turned to molecular biochemistry he remained fascinated by the properties of whole biological structures, thereby contributing a valued breadth to the study and teaching in the department. Within the university he served as Chairman of the sub-Faculty of Biochemistry and Chairman of the Faculty of Biological Sciences.

In college he was an enthusiastic tutor who made substantial demands on his pupils but inspired them with his novel and somewhat irreverent approach. This also characterised his contribution to the college which he joined at a time of rapid expansion and development. Every problem was analysed from first principles, often leading him to suggest fundamental changes in how things were done. He never let the fact that change in Oxford tends to proceed in increments deter him and his opinions often triumphed at college meetings. He made invaluable contributions to the Finance Committee, and to the gratitude of the Fellows was long an outstanding Cellmaster.

One of his hobbies was gardening, which he saw mainly as a method for producing food. He had no patience with cultivated flowers which merely took up valuable vegetable space, but was passionate about wild flowers. He advocated that gardens should be freely planted with them years before this became fashion-

able, and he declined to cut his front lawn until after their seeds had matured, much to the offence of the neighbours in the fashionable small estate on which he lived. When he circulated among them an essay outlining his policy, it was picked up by Radio Oxford, and in turn by the BBC Today programme.

Television coverage and a phone-in on the subject followed. Robinson was seen as a hero, liberating the middle class from a weekly chore. His last laugh was that after some years of his grass being treated in this way a conserved bee orchid appeared.

This was not eccentricity. It was rather the result of a careful consideration of ecology and a determination to allow his grandchildren to enjoy the diverse biological world that he had.

Robinson retired early in 1996 to walk, climb and pursue his many interests outside of science, but this was cruelly thwarted by a long illness during which he was nursed by a devoted wife, Sheila, and his daughter and two sons. At no time in his life was he ever happier than in his company and that of his grandchildren, and he and Sheila were a joy to visit even when he became extremely ill.

K. A. MCLAUCHLAN

Garth Barton Robinson, biochemist: born St Helens, Lancashire 1 July 1934; Lecturer, Department of Medical Biochemistry, Birmingham University 1964-65; University Lecturer, Department of Biochemistry, Oxford University 1965-96; Fellow, Hertford College, Oxford 1969-96; married 1957 Sheila Dyball (two sons, one daughter); died Oxford 8 April 1999.



Robinson: irreverent

Harvey Postlethwaite

THERE WERE better-known designers in Formula One, but Harvey Postlethwaite had greater things on his mind than publicity. One of the sport's more enduring characters, he was a free-thinker who was far more concerned about creating competitive racing cars. His F1 career spanned 26 years, at least twice the norm.

He sprang to prominence with Lord Hesketh's eponymous team in 1973, when he moved over from the March company to engineer Hesketh's privately owned March 731G for a young Englishman called James Hunt.

Few took them seriously; Postlethwaite held a BSc and a PhD in mechanical engineering from Birmingham University, which had taken him to ICI in 1968 as a research specialist in advanced materials, and had three years' experience at March, but was still an unknown. Hesketh was seen as little more than a playboy, and Hunt had been written off by most after a series of shunts had seen him sacked the previous year by March. But they melded together brilliantly, their outward irreverence masking steely determination. Soon Hunt was running in the top six. By the end of the year, as the works March topped, Hunt was challenging Ronnie Peterson and Lotus for victory in America.

The following year he won the non-championship Daily Express International Trophy race at Silverstone in Postlethwaite's first Hesketh car, and ran strongly in the Grand Prix. A year later still, Hunt scored a brilliant victory in Holland over World Champion-elect Niki Lauda's Ferrari, driving a developed version of Postlethwaite's racer.

Postlethwaite moved on to the Wolf team in 1977, when Jody Scheckter won first time out in Argentina, before adding two more successes. Then followed Postlethwaite's Italian era with Ferrari. Settling fluently into the Italian way of life, he dragged the Scuderia into the modern era as he laid the foundation for today's English influence within Ferrari's technical department.

In 1982 and 1983 the team took the Constructors World Championship with Postlethwaite's designs. Later, he would play a key role in the development of the semi-automatic transmission that is now ubiquitous, and which has removed the missed gearshift from the racing driver's book of excuses. When he moved in 1988 to the first of his two spells with Tyrrell (the second was in 1994), he and the aerodynamicist Jean-Claude Migeot pioneered the raised nose which is also now universal.

Postlethwaite's forte as a designer was down-to-earth pragmatism combined with a probing mind. An unusu-

al shape for the Hesketh March in 1973 was nicknamed "Silly Nose" within the team, but was in fact a clever development of the wide "splitter" style of nose that would also become widespread.

Sometimes one was tempted to believe that there were two Harvey Postlethwaites. Happy Harvey and Horrid Harvey. When the mood took him he could be abrupt. Once, as a tentative sprog reporter in Brazil, I asked him if he had a moment to discuss how the Ferraris had gone in qualifying, as he stood alone, staring at the sky, during what seemed a quiet moment. "No," he retorted trenchantly. When reminded of the incident years later, he was genuinely embarrassed. It wasn't that he was intentionally rude, more that there were times when he was totally preoccupied, wrestling mentally with a technical problem.

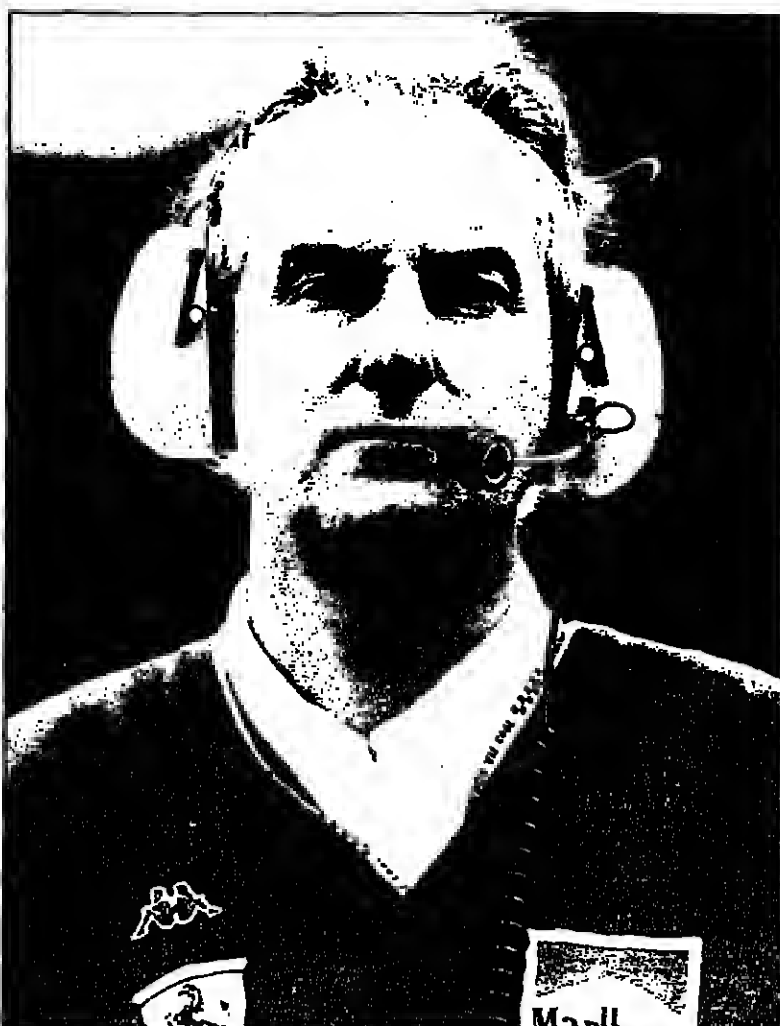
Last year we were discussing his vision of F1's future in Japan, when suddenly he said, "Never mind all that crap. How's life since you went freelance? Are you having a good time?" Privately, he clearly thought a lot about the people he shared paddock space with. He had

'The day we put Jody Scheckter in a Wolf was the day the team went whoosh!'

the rare distinction of being one of those characters you wanted to bump into in the F1 paddock. He was amusing, passionate and irreverent, but also clever and willing and able to explain technicalities to the lay mind.

Mike Gascoyne, the technical director at Jordan who was his number two at Tyrrell, said: "Harvey was a defining figure in my career and the careers of many other young engineers. His infectious enthusiasm for both engineering and motorsport was an inspiration to all those who had the benefit of working with him."

Most of the time he exuded thoroughly outgoing bonhomie. He was not dissimilar in either appearance or manner to the land speed record ace Richard Noble. It was something of a joke that, since nobody had ever seen them together, they must therefore be one and the same person, because they shared so many personality traits. The Tyrrell team regularly hosted a



Postlethwaite at the San Marino Grand Prix, 1993. Pascal Rondeau

press dinner in the paddock during the French Grand Prix at Magny-Cours. Postlethwaite - also known as "the Doc" - loved the event and the social banter, and was a fund of hilarious anecdotes. He would ruin it in good naturedly if anyone dared to miss the party because of a prior engagement. Last year's dinner was the end of an era, for it marked the last for Tyrrell, which had been sold by its founder Ken Tyrrell and was soon to be branded British American Racing. It fell right in the middle of one of England's televised World Cup matches, which ensured that it was a riotous success.

In his new role co-ordinating Honda's test programme, before the company's planned re-entry into F1 in 2000, Postlethwaite remained outspoken on technical matters. "I would like to see a far greater freedom of electronic control systems," he said. "I think we are being too black and white. It was probably right four or five years ago to put

a brake on some of these things because they were getting a little bit out of hand, but I think now that we understand them better and that the governing body is in a position to police them a bit better. We ought to be allowing more. I do really think it's a bit silly when there is more sophisticated control on your road car than there is on an F1 car. F1 should be a product leader really, not a product follower."

But he was not too vain as an engineer to play down the role of the driver. "If I had to go out and spend a budget to go F1 motor racing, I would spend a great big chunk of it on getting the best possible one," he said. "The day we put Jody Scheckter in a Wolf was the day the team went whoosh!"

DAVID TREMAYNE

Harvey Postlethwaite, mechanical engineer, born 4 March 1944; married (one son, one daughter); died Barcelona 13 April 1999.

LITERARY NOTES

RICHTOR NORTON

No mad genius but a Radical Dissenter

ANN RADCLIFFE, author of the Gothic novel *The Mysteries of Udolpho*, was one of the most famous women of her time - and the least known. She kept no diaries, other than some travel journals, and her contemporaries left virtually no reminiscences of her. Her life resembles a manuscript discovered in a Gothic novel: its leaves faded or indecipherable, pages torn in half, whole chapters missing, spurious passages by other hands.

Contemporary literary circles, finding it intolerable that the most famous woman writer in England should live a completely sequestered life, amused themselves with rumours that Ann Radcliffe had been driven mad by her efforts to conjure up horror and had been locked up in an insane asylum. Notices appeared in the papers that she had died and she took no steps to contradict them.

The public image of the mysterious Mrs Radcliffe as a mad genius contrasts sharply with the ordinary preoccupations of her middle-class domestic life, her love of dogs and music, her pleasure excursions to Dover and Worthing. However, a scrupulous and neurotic sense of propriety eventually compelled her to withdraw from the world as journalists attacked her as a sorceress.

The popularity of her novels - and the host of her "horrid" imitations - provoked a debate about how contem-

porary fiction tended to deprave and corrupt its readers. Attacks upon "The Terrorist School of Writing" appeared in the journals, relating Gothic Romanesque, including hers, to the French Revolution and the subsequent Terror. Her husband may have been so scandalised by the public discussion of his wife's works and implied lack of morals that he persuaded her to stop writing at the very height of her powers. She suffered severe melancholic depression from 1811, culminating in a mental breakdown in winter 1812. After two and a half years of secluded convalescence in Windsor, she returned to London, and her husband, in 1815, but never fully recovered her spirits.

Because of the genteel respectability of Ann Radcliffe's novels, her contemporaries did not suspect - nor are modern readers fully aware - that her family background was full of Radical Dissenters, specifically Unitarians with their sympathy for revolutionary reform.

Her uncle Dr John Jebb, Unitarian rector and controversial political writer, was notorious for heading the delegation seeking repeal of the Toleration Act in 1771 (specifically relief from subscribing to the Thirty-Nine Articles). Dr Jebb's wife Ann was a "virago", who sent numerous "petitions" to the newspapers and to politicians advocating parliamentary reform and hailing the dawn of

the French Revolution. She is one of the women, along with Mary Wollstonecraft, abused in Richard Polwhele's 1798 attack *The Unsex'd Females*.

The Jebbs were good friends of Joseph Priestley, the Unitarian and scientist whose home was destroyed by the reactionary mob who equated Unitarianism with Jacobinism, eventually forcing him to emigrate to America. Priestley had been a tutor at Warrington Academy, the leading educational institution for Rational Dissenters or Nonconformists. One of the founders of Warrington was Thomas Bentley; Ann Radcliffe's uncle, with whom she was sent to live at the age of seven, when her parents moved to Bath. Bentley and his fellow Unitarian Josiah Wedgwood became partners of the ceramics firm of Wedgwood & Bentley, whose retail outlet in Bath was managed by Ann Radcliffe's father. Her husband, William Radcliffe, was the editor of a newspaper with strong republican sympathies which annually published a poem celebrating the French Revolution.

So, in fact, the allegedly "bourgeois" attitudes of her novels should really be seen in the context of the "liberal" and "anti-Establishment" ideals of this dissenting culture.

Richter Norton is the author of *Mistress of Udolpho: the life of Ann Radcliffe* (Leicester University Press, £45/£17.99).

GAZETTE

BIRTHS, MARRIAGES & DEATHS

BIRTHS

O'FARRELL: On 9 April, in Chichester, to Joanna and Sean, a gorgeous son, Seamus Fred.

For BIRTHS, MARRIAGES & DEATHS (Births, Adoptions, Marriages, Deaths, Memorial services, Wedding anniversaries, In memoriam), telephone 0171-293 2012 or fax to 0171-293 2010; notices are charged at £6.50 a line (VAT extra). OTHER Gazette announcements, which must be submitted in writing, are charged at £10 a line, VAT extra.

LECTURES

Tate Gallery: Peter Bower, "The Evolution of Watercolour: Paper from Constable to Turner 1750-1850", 1pm. British Museum: John Ornstein, "HSCB Money Gallery: war and currency", 11.30am.

BIRTHDAYS

Queen Margrethe of Denmark, 59; Lord Abercromby, former president, John Brown & Co, 86; Vice-Admiral Sir Peter Austin, 78; Miss Jenny Bacon, Director General, Health and Safety Executive, 54; Miss Joan Bakewell, television presenter, 66; Lord Camoys, a Lord-in-Waiting, and deputy chairman, Barclays de Zoete Wedd, 59; Mr Merce Cunningham, choreographer, 90; Ms Valerie Davey MP, 59; Miss Lynne Franks, writer and broadcaster, 51; Mr Francois Gordon, ambassador to Algeria, 46; Sir John Harvey-Jones, former chairman, ICI, 75; Mr Vince Hill, singer, 67; Mr Michael Hirst, former Chief Constable, Leicestershire, 81; Sir Geoffrey Johnson-Smith MP, 75; Mr Richard Kershaw, radio and television broadcaster, 65; Miss Ruth Madoc, actress, 56; Mr Peter Marshall, chairman, Ocean Group, 72; Miss Conchita Martinez, tennis player, 37; Mr Spike Milligan, comedian and writer, 81; Mr Jimmy Osmond, singer, 36; Sir Geoffrey Owen, former Editor, *Financial Times*, 65; Mr Frank Page, television journalist and broadcaster, 69; Mr Gerry Rafferty, singer and songwriter, 52; Mr James Rant,

Judge Advocate General of the Army and RAE, 63; Sir John Robson, former ambassador to Norway, 69; Miss Gabriela Sabatini, tennis player, 29; Miss Constance Shacklock, opera singer, 86; Dr Llewellyn Smith MP, 58; Dr William Stearn, consultant biologist, 88; Mr Leo Tindemans, statesman, 77; Professor Barbara Tizard, educationist, 73; Sir Peter Ustinov, actor and writer, 78.

ANNIVERSARIES

Births: Charles Montagu, first Earl of Halifax, politician, poet and founder of the Bank of England, 1681; Wilbur Wright, aviation pioneer, 1867; Sir Charles Spencer Chaplin, comedian, 1889; Henry (Barton) Mancini, composer, 1924. Deaths: Abba Babb, playwright and novelist, 1989; Marie (Gresholtz) Tussaud, waxworks show proprietor, 1850; Bernadette Soubirous, St Bernadette of Lourdes, 1879. On this day: Charles Edward Stuart, the Young Pretender, was decisively defeated at Culloden by Cumberland, 1746; the Organisation for European Economic Co-operation (OEEC) was set up, 1948. Today is the Feast Day of St Bernadette, St Contardo, St Drogo or Druon, St Eneatis, St

Fructuosus Braga, St Joseph Benedict Labre, St Magnus of Orkney, St Opatius and the Martyrs of Saragossa, St Paternus or Pair of Avranches and St Turibius of Astorga.

LUNCHEONS

HM Government: Mr George Robertson, Secretary of State for Defence was the host at a luncheon given by HM Government yesterday at Lancaster House, London SW1, in honour of Dr Janos Szabo, Minister for Defence of the Republic of Hungary.

SYNAGOGUE SERVICES

Details of synagogue services to be held tomorrow may be obtained by telephoning the following. Sabbath begins in London at 7.44pm.

United Synagogues: 0181-343 8989. Federation of Synagogues: 0181-302 2263. Union of Liberal and Progressive Synagogues: 0171-580 1662. Reform Synagogues of Great Britain: 0181-348 4731. Spanish and Portuguese Jews Congregation: 0171-239 2572. New London Synagogue (Masorti): 0171-328 1026.

ROYAL ENGAGEMENTS

The Prince of Wales launches the "Breakthrough" Corporate Challenge at the Royal Armouries, Leeds. The Princess Royal visits St Magnus Cathedral, Kirkwall, Orkney, opens the Pictaquay Centre in Kirkwall; and, as President, Riding for the Disabled Association, visits the Orkney Branch at the Rugby Football Club, Orkney. The Duke of Kent, Livestock, the Mercers' Company attends a lunch at Mercers' Hall, London EC2. Princess Alexandra, Patron of Home-Start, visits the Clackmannanshire Scheme at 6 Marshmill, Alloa; as Vice-Patron of the Young Women's Christian Association, opens the new Centre in Restalrig Road, Shillingleith, Edinburgh; and, as Deputy President, visits the British Red Cross Shop at 17 Maple Court, Shillingleith, Alloa.

CHANGING OF THE GUARD

The Household Cavalry Mounted Regiment mounts the Queen's Life Guard at Horse Guards, 11am. F Company Scots Guards mounts the Queen's Guard, at Buckingham Palace, 11.30am, band provided by the Welsh Guards.

CHESS

JON SPEELMAN

THE DOS Hermanas tournament in Spain is drawing to its close, with just two potentially exciting rounds left. Today the leader Michael Adams on 5/7 plays White against Vladimir Kramnik on 4.5 - and neither player will be absolutely satisfied with a draw, since tomorrow Kramnik has White against Topalov while Adams has a potentially treacherous Black against Karпов.

The other scores are Gel-fand, Illescas and Topalov 4, Karпов 3.5, Korchnoi 3, Anand and Svidler 2.5, Judit Polgar 2. Of these, the most striking is Viswanathan Anand's awful form, with two losses and not a single win. And things could have been even worse...

11 Ng5 is Igor Zaitsev's amazing concept which Anatoly Karпов sprang on Viktor Korchnoi in the 10th game of their monumental world championship match in Baguio City in 1978. The idea is to answer 11... Qxg5 with 12 Qb3 and this has now given rise to much complex and unclear theory.

11... Bb5 was supposed to be quite reliable but the splendid

novelty 15 e6! forcing open the e file puts the ball firmly back in Black's court. Svidler got a vicious attack and could have improved with the simple 26 dxe6 Rxe6 (if 26... Nc6 27 Rxd5! Rxd5 28 Qg5!) 27 Bf4. But Anand's inspired wriggling eventually gave him some initiative for the several pawns deficit and on move 43 he won a piece - though 43... Rxd2+ 44 Kd1 Rxd2 may be better. The widely separated pawns proved much better than the knight but Anand set up an apparently watertight defence with the pawn on d4 indirectly protected by the knight fork... Nb5+.

The tragedy for Svidler, who has never beaten Anand, is: he agreed the draw in a won position! After 70 Kxd4 Nb5+ 71 Kc5 Nxa7 72 Kb6! Nc8+ 73 Kc7 White wins after either 73... Ne7 74 Kf7 75 f6+ or 73... Na7 74 Kd7 Nb5+ or 74... Kb6 75 Kf7 Kd7 76 f6+ Kxd7 77 Kf7 78 Kd7.

White: Peter Svidler
Black: Viswanathan Anand
Ruy Lopez Open Variation

1 e4 e5
2 Nf3 Nc6
3 Bb5 a5
4 Ba4 Nf6
5 0-0 Nxe4
6 d4 b5
7 Bb3 d5
8 dxe5 Be6
9 Nbd2 Nc5
10 c3 d4
11 Ng5 Bd5
12 Nd7 Kf7
13 Qg4+ Ke7
14 Qg4+ Ke7
15 e6! Bxe6
16 Re1 Qd7
17 Bxe6 Nxe6
18 Nb5 Re8
19 Ng5 Ncd8
20 Bd2 h6
21 Nf3 Qd5
22 Re5 Qd6
23 cxd4 h5
24 Qe4 Kf7
25 d5 Kg8
26 Qg6 Re7
27 Ra1 Nd4
28 Qxd6 Nxd3+
29 exd3 cxd6
30 Rxe7 Bxe7
31 Rxe7 Nf7
32 Ra7 h4
33 Ra8+ Kh7
34 Rxa6 Kg6
35 Rb6 Rcb8

EAST CRIMED his partner for overcalling on a threadbare suit on this deal. (Dear West. Please do not lose any sleep about this; I would not dream of passing with your hand.) but the real blame lay with East later in the defence.

North opened One Diamond, South responded One Heart, and West overcalled with One Spade - the bid that was later criticised. North rebid Two Diamonds for, in spite of his minimum, he had a six-card suit, and East competed with Two Spades. South now tried Three Clubs and, after a heart preference from North, went on to game. West, not placing much reliance on his feeble spades, made the good start of the ace and another trump.

After winning in hand, declarer led ♠3 to the eight, ten and queen. East realised the danger of dummy's long diamond suit. If, for example, he had played a third trump, South would win, cash ♠A and ruff a diamond, with ♠A as an entry to his established diamonds. So East returned ♠3 into dummy's tenure. South's

BRIDGE

ALAN HIRON

Love all; dealer North
North
♠ A Q 7 4
♥ 9 5 3
♦ A 10 7 5 4 2
♣ none
West
♠ 10 9 6 5 2
♥ A 2
♦ K J 8
♣ K Q 8
East
♠ K 8 3
♥ 10 8 6
♦ Q 9
♣ 10 9 7 5 2
South
♠ J
♥ K Q J 7 4
♦ 6 3
♣ A J 6 4 3

jack held the trick and he entered dummy with a club ruff. Now ♠A and a spade ruff established dummy's queen. After drawing the last trump, declarer now had 10 tricks.

It was not unreasonable for East to expect his partner to hold ♠J for his overall, but it would have cost him nothing to return ♠K instead of a low spade. Unable to bring in the diamonds, and with only two spade tricks, South would have been a trick short of his contract.

Revocation of legal aid certificate

REVOCATION OR discharge of a legal aid certificate under regulation 78 of the Civil Legal Aid (General) Regulations 1989 was not a penalty imposed on the particular applicant but was designed to underline the duty of those who applied for legal aid to make full disclosure.

The Court of Appeal dismissed the applicant's appeal against the dismissal of his application for judicial review of the decision of the Legal Aid Board to revoke his legal aid certificate.

The applicant wished to commence proceedings against his former employer, and applied for legal aid. The application form contained the question: "Do you or your partner have any savings?" The applicant ticked the box marked "No". The applicant also answered "No" to the question: "Do you or your partner have any life insurance or endowment policies?"

He was granted legal aid and commenced proceedings, in the course of which the employer made representations to the Legal Aid Board. As a result of those representations the board asked the applicant to produce copies of his bank statements.

They showed that when he had completed the application form he had had £3,708.26 in his joint current bank account. It also came to light that he had a pension policy, which contained an element of life cover, and which was cashed in less than a month after he had completed the application form, providing a lump sum of £1,792.71 and monthly payments of £45.66.

The board considered that the applicant had not answered

FRIDAY LAW REPORT

16 APRIL 1999

Regina v Legal Aid Area Committee, ex parte Parsons
Court of Appeal (Lord Justice Beldam, Lord Justice Aldous and Lord Justice Mantell)
24 March 1999

the questions in his application form truthfully, and issued a notice requiring him to show cause why the legal aid certificate should not be discharged or revoked. The applicant's explanation to the board was that he did not consider that the money in his bank account was "savings", nor did he consider that the policy was an insurance or endowment policy.

The board revoked the applicant's legal aid certificate pursuant to reg 78 of the Civil Legal Aid (General) Regulations 1989 on the ground that he had "... made an untrue statement as to his/her financial resources or had failed to disclose a material fact concerning them."

John Meredith-Hardy (Bright Broad & Skimard, Cullinstown) for the applicant; Beverley Lang (Legal Department, Legal Aid Board) for the Area Committee.

Lord Justice Beldam said that the principal ground of appeal was that the disproportionate penal sanction of revocation should not have been imposed when the alternative of discharge was available.

The decision of the Area Committee was essentially within its proper sphere, and the fact that the applicant regarded the consequences as disproportionate did not make the decision unreasonable.

To import the idea that the Legal Aid Board in revoking or discharging a legal aid certificate was imposing a penalty was to introduce a qualification into the 1989 Regulations which was liable to lead to a misunderstanding of the board's function.

The judge had been right to describe the relationship between an applicant for legal aid and the board as one requiring the utmost good faith, on the part of the applicant. The board was being asked to underwrite the costs of litigation on behalf of the applicant, and was dependent upon his making full disclosure of all of his assets. The position of the board was comparable to that of an insurance company.

Moreover, the board was entitled to have regard not only to the applicant's position but also to the position of the other party to the proposed litigation. It was therefore inaccurate to suggest that action taken by the board, after a representation from the opposite party had led to a finding that the applicant had failed to make full disclosure, was punitive.

The board's action was not a penalty imposed on the particular applicant but was designed to underline the duty of those who applied for legal aid. If an applicant had failed to make full disclosure in a material respect, the course of revocation might well be more appropriate than discharge.

KATE O'HANLON
Barrister

WORDS

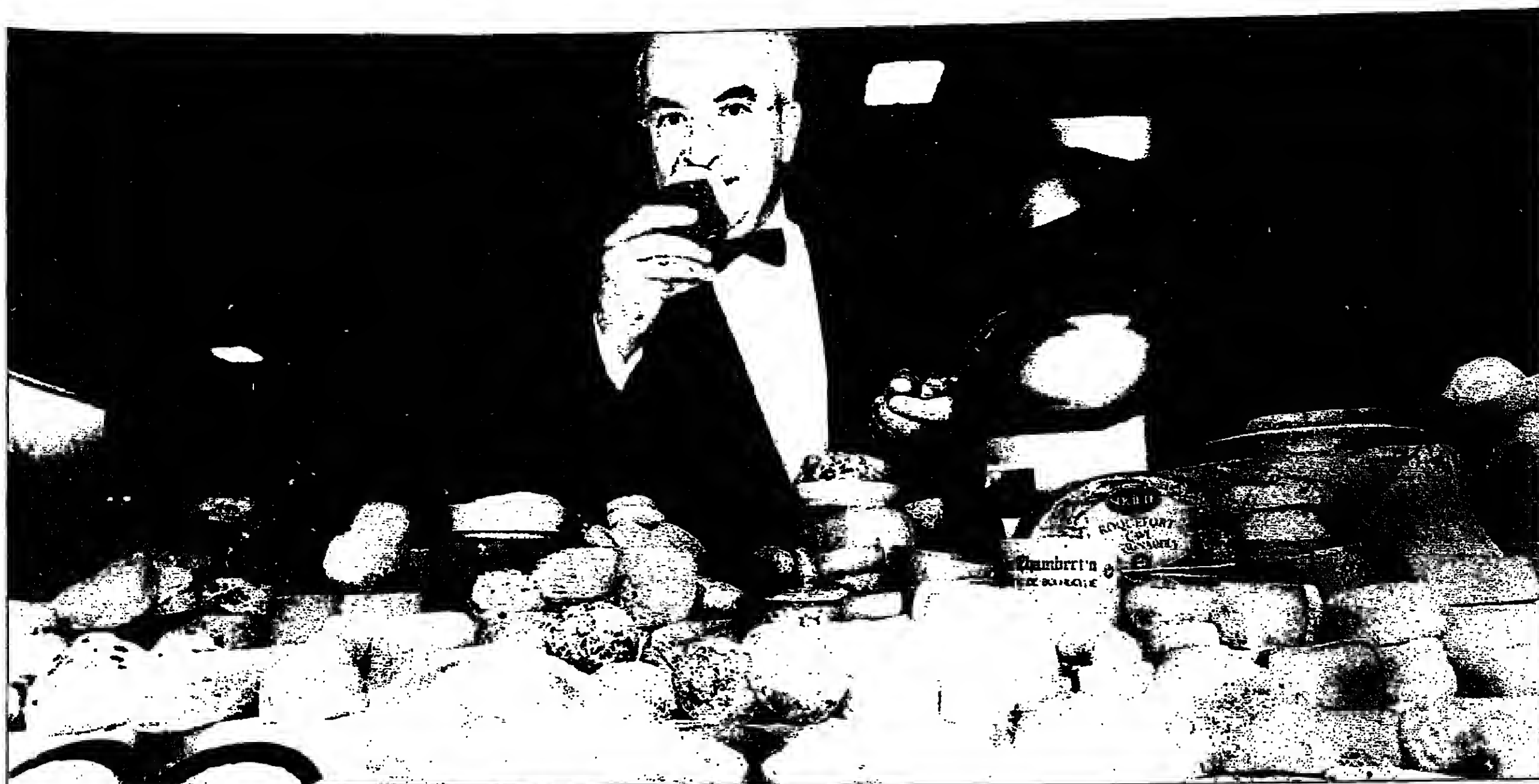
CHRISTOPHER HAWTREE

thanatophilic, adj.

pleasure he took in thoughts of death, he still wanted a hefty tip.

Meanwhile, in the Angler's Rest, the Italian

scholar Ian Thomson recalls the time that he had no sooner handed over the \$50 demanded by a driver than two policemen leapt from a car and asked him how much he had paid; they made the driver return it and charge the correct fare from JFK - \$30. The fellow looked as if he would still turn nasty without a tip.



Alfred Macdonald

Liberté! Fraternité! Fromage!

A new crisis is dividing France. Cheese. In particular, the soft, smelly unpasteurised cheese of French legend. Can it kill you? Does listeria hysteria mean death to an entire culture? And how reliable is the science behind the scare? By John Lichfield

Gérard Poulard is a magician. After the main dish has been cleared away at the Montparnasse 25 restaurant, he arrives at your table like a conjuror, pushing a wheeled cabinet. From within, he produces, with a flourish, the whole of the French countryside, from Maroilles in the mournful north to Roquefort in the empty, mountainous south west: a colourful and fragrant explosion of 120 to 150 kinds of French cheese.

Mr Poulard is one of the best, and certainly the most erudite and entertaining, master cheese-waiters in Paris. He will list not only the names of the cheeses but also the names of the people who make them. He will explain the season when it is best to eat a certain cheese and why. (Goats' cheese is best in spring, when the soft grass is up on the hills of Burgundy or the Auvergne; Camembert in the early summer, when the Normandy grass is at its most lush.)

This week, Mr Poulard agreed to reverse roles. I visited him at the Montparnasse 25 (among the friendliest of starred Michelin restaurants) with my own selection of cheeses: typical supermarket offerings, heat-treated, plastic-wrapped but not necessarily cheap. I wanted him to help me to understand a great gastronomic-hygienic-political debate which has been raging in the French press, and the French supermarket aisle, since the beginning of the year.

What is the definition of a genuine, and typically French, soft cheese? Can the traditional soft cheese, made with raw milk, kill you? Is the infinite variety of French cheeses – one of the great achievements of French culture – threatened with a thinning out, a dumbing down, by a conspiracy between French officialdom, the European Commission, the United States and the mass cheese-makers?

Mr Poulard cheerfully consented to try my selection. Taking a slice of one of the best-selling mass-produced, heat-treated Camemberts (Président), he swung his knife gently from side to side, and then around in slow circles, as he considered its taste and texture. His face was impassive but his eyes seemed to contain a profound sadness; this was the look of a man whose suspicions had been, miserably, confirmed.

"This cheese is very interesting," he said. "For children. This is the kind of cheese that you could eat and then leave immediately for an assignation with your mistress without fear of being rejected."

"This is the perfect cheese for someone who expects to kiss someone before the night is over. In other words, this is a perfectly good and honourable cheese except that it is bland, almost odourless, almost tasteless. It is a cheese for people who don't like cheese."

Cheese is a French paradox. Here we have a country that is mocked by the clever, freedom-loving Anglo-Saxons for its statist impulses, its over-regulation, its restrictions of choice. And yet France has devised hundreds of ways of turning cows', sheep's and goats' milk into something called cheese: all different, all delicious.

Charles de Gaulle once famously said that it was impossible to govern a country with 365 different kinds of cheese. He understated the problem. There are officially recognised to be 394 types of French cheese and some obstinate "fromageologues" (cheesologists) reckon that, taking sub-varieties into account, there are more than 1,000.

America, the home of liberty and choice, is the world's biggest cheese producer, churning out twice as much cheese as France. But can you name a single American cheese? They do exist but they tend to be rubberised, over-processed versions of European cheeses, best used as doorknobs or shock-absorbers.

Now, many French cheese traditionalists, including Mr Poulard, fear that France is heading inexorably in the same direction, or may be unless something is done. "If you look at this trolley," said Mr Poulard, "you are looking at a wonderful array of flavours, odours, soils, climates, techniques, handed down and refined over centuries. You may also be looking at a museum piece. As the law now stands, many of these cheeses are doomed to vanish."

Since 1 January of last year, EU regulations, transposed into a new French law, have made it illegal to sell a cheese that contains the merest trace of the listeria germ, which exists widely in everything around us but can cause serious food poisoning among people with reduced resistance (the young, the elderly, the pregnant). Since 1 January of this year, any discovery of listeria in cheese has to be announced in the press and the batch in question must be withdrawn from the market.

In January there was a genuine and serious case of listeriosis in France, which killed two people, including a newborn baby who had been infected in the womb. The outbreak was traced to a factory in Burgundy making a rich, soft cheese called Epoisses. The factory – long accused by other local cheese-makers of taking short-cuts with safety methods – was closed, and 200,000 cheeses were destroyed.

The French public did not distinguish one brand of Epoisses from another. Sales of all Epoisses cheeses plunged by 70 per cent and have barely recovered three months later. The other producers – there are only half a dozen altogether – are barely surviving. Epoisses, a centuries-old cheese that was revived commercially in the Fifties, and is sometimes known as "the king of cheeses", may soon cease to exist, like some rare species of Amazonian beetle or butterfly.

Since January, there have been a series of listeria "finds" in other soft cheeses, none of which has produced sickness or death. The finds have been widely, and sometimes misleadingly, publicised, partly because of the incident in Burgundy, partly because of the new regulations. With each announcement, sales of the cheeses involved – St-Félicien, Morilles and unpasteurised Camembert – have plummeted.

The general impression left by these scares – despite several careful articles in the French press; less so on television – is that there is suddenly a health problem with the traditional French soft, runny cheese made from *lait cru*, or raw, unpasteurised milk. In fact, this is the reverse of the truth: all of the cheeses in which listeria germs were found (save one, to which we will return) were heat-treated cheeses. In other words, they were more like the kinds of supermarket cheeses I brought to Mr Poulard.

And yet it is the raw-milk cheeses that are suffering in the shops. What is going on?

The traditional French soft, runny cheese is made with untreated milk, maintained at the

temperature at which it leaves the cow's udder (37°C). There is no attempt made to kill off all bacteria, since the bacteria are what makes the cheese, including the lovely, chalky white *flore* – a form of fungus – which appears naturally on the rind of many soft cheeses. There will almost certainly be listeria germs in the cheese at some stage – since listeria is everywhere – but they will be fought and defeated by other bacteria naturally occurring in the cheese. If this were not so, soft cheese would have been poisoning people for centuries.

Enormous care is, however, needed to preserve the quality of the raw milk before, and while, the cheese is made. It is impossible – or impossibly expensive – to make soft cheese with untreated milk on an industrial scale. Large manufacturers, in France as elsewhere, have therefore adopted "pasteurisation" – heating milk to 72°C – or "thermisation" – which means heat treatment at 67°C.

The first destroys all the natural bacteria, good and bad, and therefore much of the variety and depth of taste. Controlled bacteria are used to make the cheese (including penicillin spray to replicate the white rind). The effect is a duller, more uniform, unsightly cheese (like the bland-but-romantic Camembert I served to Mr Poulard).

The second, less drastic heating method – which Mr Poulard approves of, within limits – allows cheese to be created in larger quantities but preserves more of its character and flavour. Almost all Camembert that advertises itself as being made with *lait cru* is in fact mildly heat-treated in this way. Put another way: the traditional, genuine,

raw-milk Camembert, which was invented by Madame Marie Harel 208 years ago, has already virtually ceased to exist.

The problem is that both forms of heat treatment also kill the natural defence bacteria in the cheese. The "processed" cheese is therefore vulnerable to listeria attack at a later stage. Supporters of the raw-milk cheese say that the conventional wisdom – pasteurised means healthy – is the reverse of the truth. The "cleaner" cheese is, the more dangerous it can become.

Almost all the cheeses that have fallen foul of the new law so far had been heat-treated in one way or another (including the rogue killer Epoisses, which was pasteurised). The one genuine raw-milk cheese to have been in trouble was a St-Félicien. When the batch was checked a second and third time, the listeria was found to have gone: destroyed by the cheese's own internal defence mechanism.

None the less, sales of St-Félicien have fallen by 70 per cent. Makers and supporters of the raw-milk cheese say that a historic and gastronomic injustice is being committed. The new regulations followed pressure from the US (which is now having second thoughts) but also lobbying by the big EU dairy companies, including French ones. The requirement for listeria-free cheese favours the pasteurised cheese-makers since, in theory, the raw and "thermised" milk cheeses are more likely to fall foul of the law.

To try to stay, even notionally, within the law, small, traditional cheese-producers are having to invest tens of thousands of pounds in new equipment. None the less, small doses of listeria will often be present – and harmlessly present – in traditional soft cheeses. The prospect of a whole series of damaging scares lies ahead. The premise – pasteurised healthy, unpasteurised dangerous – is now so deeply implanted in the public mind that few consumers, even French consumers, have noticed that it is the heat-treated cheeses that are causing the real difficulties.

The problem has been compounded by insensitive, and sometimes misleading, application of the laws by the French government machine, which is in the throes of a food-safety turf war between the ministries of agriculture and health.

Mr Poulard is not the only person to suspect an industrial "plot" to squash traditional French cheeses, which had, until now, been rapidly increasing their share of the market. This may be going a little too far. It seems more to be a case of bureaucratic heavy-handedness, compounded by misunderstanding by consumers. There is, however, a case for the EU directive, at the origin of the problem, to be urgently reviewed.

To make his case, Mr Poulard might consider sending to each member of the new European Commission a small piece of Clacibout, a goats' cheese from his trolley that we tasted after mine had been dumped in the bin. The cheese, which comes from Burgundy, resembles its homeland: On trying it, you encounter ridge after rolling ridge of taste, each as beautiful as the last.

Sad farewell to the silicone dollies

It's a disaster for womankind. Former 'Baywatch' babe Pamela Anderson has got rid of her breast implants. Why can't she leave the natural look to the rest of us? By Anita Chaudhuri

BAD NEWS for plastic surgeons. One of the industry's most alluring ambassadors has rather inconveniently gone and had her breast implants removed. Pamela Anderson, for it is she, has suddenly and inexplicably decided to embrace the "natural look".

Whether this will make some of the 8,000 women who have breast-enhancing operations in Britain each year think again, remains to be seen. "Pamela just wanted her body to go back to its natural state," commented Marleah Leslie, Anderson's official spokeswoman. "There were no problems," anxious fans were reassured.

Apparently the star has deflated from a 36D to a 36C. There was, however, no comment made on any plans to further her quest for naturalism by removing the collagen from

her lips, the bleach from her hair or the mascara from her lashes.

Since the goddess of silicone has earned untold millions from her preposterous plastic endowments, it seems a bit late in the day for her to start espousing the virtues of realism. This from the creature who made her fortune on *Baywatch* before graduating to largely non-speaking roles in action movies such as *Barb Wire* (don't worry, you didn't miss much) and *VIP*, a syndicated television detective series. Even post-*Baywatch*, her website still attracts 8 million visitors a month.

True, Anderson (who, appro-

priately enough, paid for her breast-enlargements out of her first *Playboy* fee), has not always been happy with her freaky, Frankenstein's monsters created by silicone sorcerers. "We wouldn't want to look that way, not if you paid us. After all, we reason, if only we too had a spare \$2,500 (the sum Anderson spent on her breasts), we could easily look just like that. Since we

can't compete with their pneumatic bulges, we can just forget about them and go back to munching our Pop Tarts."

Silicone falsies are a blessing for womankind. Women like Pamela Anderson and Anna Nicole Smith look so plastic and pumped up that men can safely fantasise about them without being any more unfaithful than if they were drooling over a rubber doll. To prove the

point, Anderson once appeared for the cameras in a spray-on rubber leotard and thigh-high pin-heel boots, observed by her proud husband as though she were a performing seal.

This version of womanhood is unreal, so real men need not engage with it. Of course, there are men whose image of themselves works better when pumped up. Sylvester Stallone reportedly burst into the operating theatre when his girlfriend, Angie Everhart, was about to undergo breast-enhancing surgery and persuaded the surgeon to make them even bigger than she wanted. Why? Sly must have been amazed when she came

round from the operation and wasn't very happy about it. Sarah Grogan, a psychologist and author of *Body Image*, a study of body dissatisfaction among men, women and children, agrees that Anderson is an archetypal fantasy figure whom men respond to in a way that women don't.

"Men tend to prefer slenderness with largish breasts and this presents a conflict for women who wish to be attractive to men. Media images of women's bodies aimed at a male audience often present an unusual slim-hipped, long-legged, large-breasted ideal. Pamela Anderson is a good example. This ideal is possible for

SCIENCE

Small, deadly, likes to travel

An age-old pig virus in Malaysia has begun killing humans. So what has provoked it to jump species now? By Charles Arthur

Killing pigs in a pen may sound like a piece of simile, akin to shooting fish in a barrel. Except that in Malaysia and Singapore, killing pigs has become a necessary precaution to try to stop people dying. So far, the Malaysian army has killed almost 800,000 pigs as part of an eradication programme that takes in 1.2 million animals nationally.

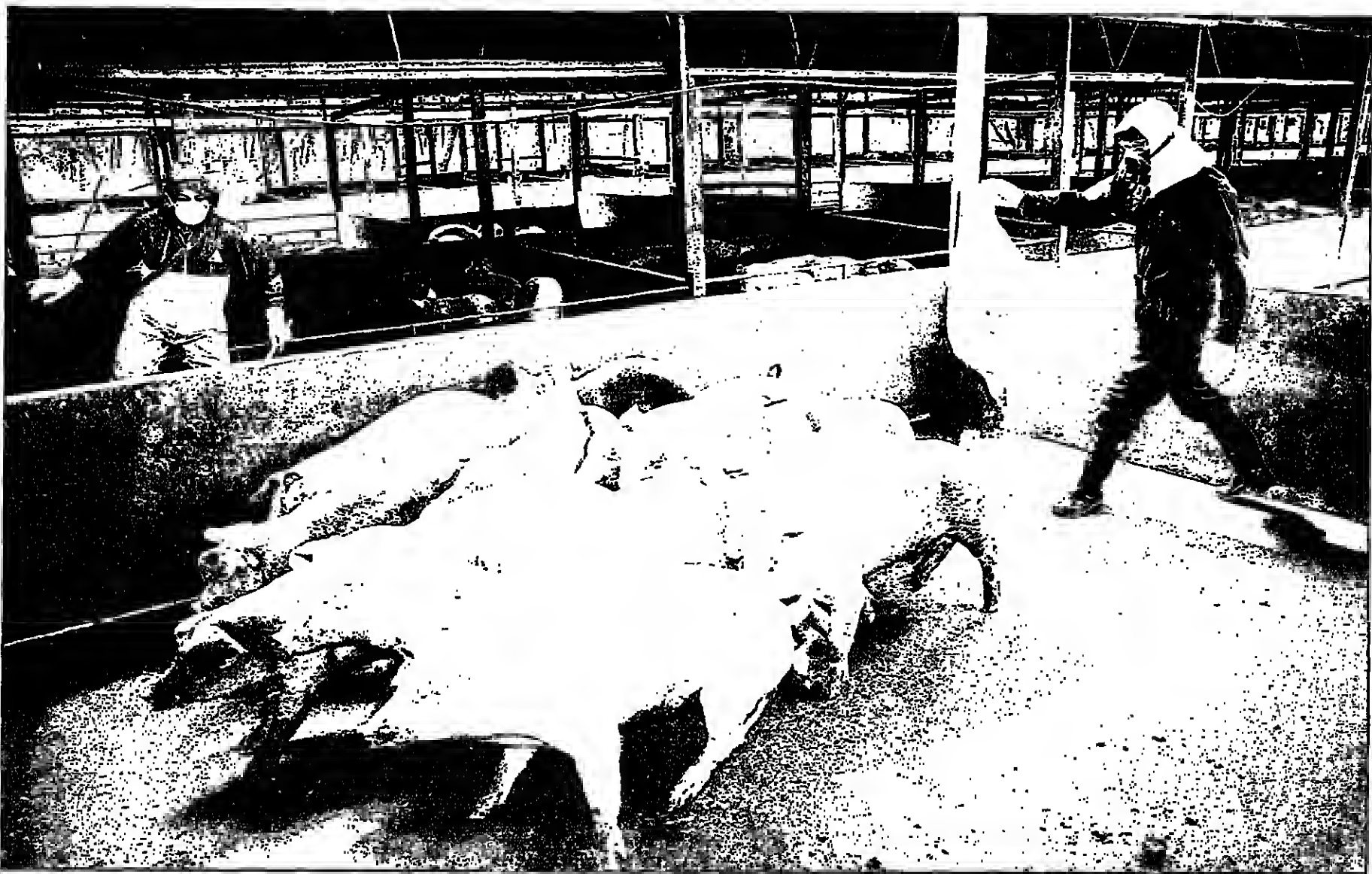
The aim is to prevent the human death toll - 117 since 29 September - from mounting further. The cause is what the US Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) in Atlanta calls "a virus that is not like any we have ever seen before".

As with so many before it, the cause of the outbreak is a zoonosis - a disease passed from animals to humans. Zoonoses include the most deadly illnesses known to humans, a roll-call including Aids, the Black Death and the Ebola virus, to name only the most famous.

So does that mean that the new virus causing the deaths in Malaysia is equally deadly? So far, the answer seems to be no. Though the CDC is still studying it, it appears that human beings are, in the scientific term, a "dead-end host" for the virus - that is, it is not transmitted between people. (Unfortunately, the use of this term early in the outbreak of mad cow disease, or BSE, when cattle were termed dead-end hosts, led people to conclude, wrongly, that BSE could not be transmitted to people. Though it is not caused by a virus, BSE is a zoonosis.)

What intrigues scientists is why a virus will emerge from an animal carrier - known as a "reservoir" - to infect a human being at one time rather than another, and, more importantly, working out a way to predict or measure the likelihood of people infected with the virus then passing it on to others.

The Malaysian virus, dubbed "Nipah" (pronounced "nee-pa") after a badly affected pig-rearing village where it was first detected, is related, but not identical, to the Hendra virus. That was identified only in 1994, when an outbreak in Australia led to the death of 13 racehorses and a trainer. In both cases, the reservoir is thought to be fruit bats, but the entire genetic blueprint (genome) of Nipah differs from that of Hendra by about 20 per cent. "It is quite different from the Hen-



So far, the Malaysian army has killed 800,000 pigs in an attempt to eradicate the 'Nipah' virus

Vincent Thian/AP

dra virus," says Dr Brian Mahy, director of the division of viral and rickettsial diseases at the CDC. "So we have to assume that if it has been in a reservoir, then it has been there a long time."

Dr Mahy is one of the CDC team who are investigating the new virus, having been called in by the Malaysian government three weeks ago. They have already established that it affects not just human beings and pigs, but also dogs and goats; a dog was found dying from the infection. That fact alone makes the virus remarkable. "Infecting several different species is unusual; we don't see many that do that," he says. Even so, the likelihood is that

since Nipah is so different from Hendra it must be very old, so people must have fallen ill with it in the past, according to David Onions, one of Britain's leading experts on zoonoses, who has spoken to the CDC team. "It has probably occurred before," he says, "but hasn't been noticed."

Indeed, zoonoses are nothing new. Ever since humans began domesticating animals such as cattle and dogs thousands of years ago, viruses have had increased opportunities to jump from one species of host to another. In many cases they cannot do so, or our defenses fight them off easily. But in a few cases the reservoir animals (which

may not even develop symptoms) can pass on viruses that acquire lethal effect in human beings.

Research published earlier this year showed that HIV, the human immunodeficiency virus that leads to Aids, has for thousands of years crossed and re-crossed between humans and primates where it exists as SIV, simian immunodeficiency virus, in the central African jungles. The critical difference is that in this century international travel has allowed viruses to spread rapidly around the globe. In addition, rising populations have put increasing pressure on people in the Third World to encroach on tropical forests. This has inevitably

brought them closer to the viruses of wild animals.

"There are two kinds of zoonosis," explains Professor Onions. "The first is where the human is a dead-end host - an infected person cannot pass it on to another. The worrying other kind is where we can transmit it to other people. If you want a nightmare scenario, and for some reason some people do, the most dangerous kind of zoonosis would be from somebody going on an exotic holiday, catching a new disease with a long incubation period, and then becoming a blood donor. However, it is not very likely." Other examples of zoonoses include influenza, in which the more

virulent forms (including the one that swept Britain earlier this year) often result from a "recombination", or mixing, of the virus genome within the reservoir population. "The thing about the influenza virus is that it has a segmented genome," says Dr Mahy. "It is broken up into eight parts, which can recombine in different orders in the reservoir animal to give more or less virulent forms. We can then catch it back, as in the case of Asian flu."

Pigs are almost the ideal host for viruses on the path towards zoonosis; they have many human-like characteristics, and even at the genetic level they share with human beings some strong similarities in

their immune system. "They have [cell] receptors for both bird and human viruses," explains Dr Mahy.

Professor Onions points out that certain types of virus are well-adapted to changing or mutating rapidly, notably those that use RNA - a close cousin of DNA - as their genetic material. "The RNA viruses will change about one in every 10,000 nucleotides each time they reproduce. They also recombine very frequently. For flu (an RNA virus), pigs act like a mixing vessel for producing new forms of a virus."

The phrase for this phase is "amplification", having recombined, the virus can then pass between different animals, until its infectivity and virulence are sufficient for it to make the hop to a new species, whose cell receptors and machinery will differ in various ways from their existing host. The crucial question then becomes: how effectively can the newly infected human being's immune system cope with the threat from this new invader?

In the case of Nipah, those who have so far died or been infected have all been adult men who were in close contact with pigs. It has also infected 11 abattoir workers in Singapore - all of whom had handled imported pig meat from Malaysia. Killing the pigs is thus seen as the simplest means of wiping out the infection - even though the primary reservoir is the fruit bat.

Zoonoses often have serious knock-on effects besides the illnesses they cause; the Nipah epidemic has wrecked Malaysia's £250m pork trade, and hit the tourism industry - though the CDC advises that visitors are unlikely to be endangered as long as they stay away from pig-breeding regions.

But what about the future? Should we expect more deadly zoonoses to spring up as international travel comes to more and more countries, and humans push further into previously untouched jungle, and live closer to animals?

"The idea of zoonosis is a very anthropomorphic view of life," says Professor Onions. "There are diseases that pass from cattle to sheep; there are some that pass from humans to animals. There's a tendency to think that what happens to us is special. But from an evolutionary viewpoint there's nothing special about this. The fact is that most diseases we see now were probably zoonoses at some stage in their development - and we're still here."

Scientists need to learn the ethics of science

WHY IS fraud in science receiving so much attention?

I am not alone in having published results that later turned out to be wrong. It happens all the time, not only among lowly biologists but even among the high priests of particle physics. It is in the very nature of science that if there is error, it is corrected by the community. Any paper that makes a significant contribution will be checked by others when they make use of the results, and it is rare in the extreme for any one set of results to dominate a field.

Science progresses slowly by a remodelling of knowledge. While error can be disruptive in the short run, in the long term it is irrelevant; more than a million articles are published in scientific journals each year, but many are never quoted again and very few have a lifetime of more than 10 years in which they are repeatedly referred to. While it is the ultimate corruption of the scientific endeavour to fabricate results, the effect on the progress of science is much less serious than might be thought - but it does undermine public confidence.

The current intense concerns about fraud come from Germany, where a young research worker has exposed one of the biggest cases in Europe. Germany had apparently thought it was immune from what it saw as an American scourge, because the incentive in the US to publish papers in order to advance your career is so strong. The case involved two cancer research workers who had published widely, but 47 of their



LEWIS WOLPERT

papers were under suspicion. It is greatly to the credit of the young scientist that he exposed the fraud. It is usually the young who spot it - they are working at the bench and see what is recorded and published - but it can be difficult to point a finger at your superiors, in science or any other field.

In this case the young man was helped by his former supervisor, at another institute. Should all institutes have some sort of ombudsman to whom young workers can go?

Sometimes there is the conviction that the scientist knows the right result, and although the results do not fit, they eventually will. The first report that mice had been cloned by the transfer of nuclei from embryonic cells was treated with suspicion when it was published, as long ago as 1981, and was then exposed by a student in the laboratory as a fraud. The scientist lost his job, but in the very same issue of *Nature* that carries a detailed analysis of fraud he writes a letter claiming that, since mice have recently been cloned, his original report was true. Conviction can distort thinking. Indeed in many

scientific papers there is a temptation to massage the results, to put them in the best light and to exclude results that do not fit. A famous case is that of a scientist who earned a Nobel prize for his work on the charge on the electron - and when his laboratory notebooks were analysed it was found that he had discarded those results he did not like. He turned out to be right, but he was wrong not to report the anomalous results.

Another case involved a technician who, rather than tell his demanding boss that the cells he was culturing had stopped growing, renewed the cultures each time and so encouraged to the false idea, widely propagated in the Fifties, that cells could multiply indefinitely. Many scientific groups are now rather large, more than 30 workers, and this can make it difficult for the head of the group to keep track. Leroy Hood, a leading American molecular biologist, has described the discovery of fraud in his laboratory as the most difficult experience of his career. The rationalisation given for one of those involved was that he knew the answer. Another said he took a short cut, as he did not want to run the control again.

In order to avoid such cases in future, Hood sits down and talks to those who have come to work with him and explains about the pressures to succeed and the temptations of fraud. It seems a good way forward. Perhaps scientists need training in the ethics of science.

The writer is professor of biology as applied to medicine at University College London

I think therefore I paint

Artists' thought processes, as well as the way they move their eyes and hands, are quite different from those of the rest of us. By Steve Connor

ARTISTS THROUGHOUT history have had a reputation for being unconventional. Now science seems to support this prejudice. A study of the way artists draw objects has shown that they really do use their bodies differently from the rest of us.

John Tehalenko, a former lecturer at Imperial College in London, has carried out the first detailed research into the movements and thought processes that underpin the way artists create impressions of the world they see. His results show that when it comes to drawing a picture, artists call upon quite novel ways of co-ordinating their hands, eyes and brains.

Dr Tehalenko approached the task with the help of two techniques and a long-time friend, the artist Humphrey Ocean. He used a device called an eye-tracker, which was able to plot the precise movements of Ocean's eyes as he drew a portrait. The second approach was to employ a brain-scanner to discover which parts of Ocean's brain became active during a drawing exercise.

"I'm interested in creativity, and the way that the visual input is transformed into the manual input - therein lies the creative process," Dr Tehalenko says.

Ocean was asked to draw a portrait while wearing the eye-tracker device - which looks like a bicycle helmet attached to space-age goggles - at the Sensorimotor Control Laboratory at Oxford University. Ocean wore the device for about 12 minutes at a time. A sensor recorded his hand movements, and how these were co-ordinated with the exact motions of his eyes. A non-artist carried out the same tasks for comparison. Most people's eyes are continu-



Portraits by the artist: the efforts of the painter Humphrey Ocean revealed the distinctive qualities of his brain activity

ously moving in their sockets, at a rate of about 140 flickers a minute, in order constantly to shift the scene they are viewing over the central - and most sensitive - part of the retina. When non-artists were placed in the eye-tracker and asked to draw a face, they continued to follow this pattern, fixing their eyes on a particular spot on the face for about one third of a second.

Ocean's eye movements during drawing, however, were significantly different. From a fixation rate of 140 a minute he went down to about 10 or 12 fixations, each one lasting, of course, considerably longer. His eye movements over the

face of the subject were also less erratic and more controlled. Ocean was moving his gaze at a speed estimated to be about 40km per second and he was able to fix his interest on a spot on the face with pinpoint accuracy - whereas the non-artist's gaze wandered all over the subject.

"It shows that an artist looks at a face methodically," Dr Tehalenko says. Ocean's hand movements were also significantly different from those of a non-artist. Ocean would move his hand several times over the paper before committing himself to drawing a line. It was as if he were rehearsing his actions.

The next phase of the study was to see how Ocean's brain was working during the drawing process. For this, he was placed in a functional magnetic resonance imaging (fMRI) scanner at Stanford University in California. While lying in the scanner, Ocean was asked to draw portraits from six photographs, and six geometric figures. Subtracting the brain activity used in one activity from that used in the other should yield the mental activity needed to portray a face. The results show a clear difference from the way non-artists draw faces.

The visual information from the eye enters the visual centres at the back of the brain in both artists and non-artists, and then travels forward to the frontal areas of the cerebral cortex - the "higher" centres, which are involved in more abstract thought processes.

"In Humphrey's case, activation occurred in the right frontal region of the brain, whereas in the non-artist controls it occurred in the posterior region. It appears that Humphrey was 'thinking' the portraits, while the controls were slavishly copying them," Dr Tehalenko says.

The study, which is described in an exhibition opening today at the National Portrait Gallery in London, clearly indicates that artists have learnt to use their brains, as well as their hands and eyes, quite differently from the rest of us. Dr Tehalenko says that the next step in the research would be to see how art students learn this skill over a period of years.

The Painter's Eye, sponsored by the Wellcome Trust, can be seen at the National Portrait Gallery, London from today. Admission is free

This week, Sir Cameron Mackintosh snaffled two West End theatres from under the nose of his biggest rival. Could this mean war? And how will the map of theatreland be redrawn as a consequence? By David Lister

Oh, what a lovely carve up!

You may consider Sir John Gielgud to be the most important theatrical figure alive in Britain. But last week the West End theatre bearing his name was bought and sold without his knowledge.

Two days ago Stoll Moss, the company that until that moment owned the Gielgud, and is still the biggest player in West End theatre, held a board meeting. Its chair, the Australian multimillionaire Janet Holmes à Court, was at home in Perth, Western Australia, but she took part in the meeting by videoconferencing, probably issuing one of her hearty chuckles as they discussed how one of her closest friends, Cameron Mackintosh, had bought her the Gielgud Theatre and its Shaftesbury Avenue neighbour, the Queens, from under her nose.

But the chuckle would have been tinged with annoyance. Stoll Moss didn't know until very late in the day that Mackintosh was bidding against them. And the loss of the Gielgud would have hurt the estimable Mrs Holmes à Court. In re-naming the former Globe Theatre after Britain's greatest living actor, she had made the first of several gestures that convinced an initially sceptical British theatre establishment that she was not some philistine interloper.

By insisting that new work, such as Mark Ravenhill's *Shopping and Fucking* and Ben Elton's *Popcorn*, be programmed at some of her Shaftesbury Avenue theatres, she had further surprised and delighted the cynics. In addition, she broke with a longstanding tradition: that of theatre owners' ingrained lack of concern for audience comfort. She put money into an extensive renovation programme and built more ladies' lavatories in her theatres.

Now two of the prime ones will be lost to her when her lease runs out in 2006. She has, admittedly had other things on her mind. Mrs Holmes à Court - widow of the Australian property magnate Robert Holmes à Court and, like her late husband, a land and cattle owner in Australia - is now being touted as Australia's first republican president. Opinion polls have made her the people's choice if referendums show that the country wants to become a republic.

Such is the calibre of the people who for some reason or other enjoy running London's theatres - traditionally a sure-fire way of losing money. One of Mrs Holmes à Court's closest associates confirmed yesterday that even if she becomes president of Australia there is no way that she will give up her theatre interests in Britain.

Australia's first republican president may forgo riding in state along the Mall: she certainly isn't going to miss a first night at the London Palladium. But that's not her

most pressing concern. Whether or not the Queen loses Australia's potential new president has lost the Queens.

Sir Cameron put in a £15m bid for the leasehold of it and the Gielgud. Stoll Moss were not prepared to match it. It didn't make business sense. True, little that goes on in theatre does. And if there is one man in the West End who defines philanthropy it is Cameron Mackintosh, who, for instance, has recently given Lionel Bart a share of royalties in the latest production of *Oliver!*, donated money to the National Theatre to put on musicals, and set up a chair of contemporary theatre at Oxford University. But, even by the sentimental business rules of Shaftesbury Avenue, it was hard to understand what Mackintosh was up to.

Richard Johnston, the chief executive of Stoll Moss, said yesterday: "Clearly we would like to have acquired the theatres at a price we think sensible. We're quite relaxed about it because in our view it's impossible to get a return for what Cameron has

theatre after seeing *West Side Story* as a boy. Cameron has exactly the same feeling, after seeing *Salad Days*.

Mackintosh's business associate for the last 20 years has been Martin McCullum, now managing director of Cameron Mackintosh's theatrical empire. "It makes sense for the company to invest in what it understands, which is theatres," McCullum says. "We will be involved in programming, and Cameron will have a hand in it."

Another West End theatre magnate, who does not wish to be named, is more blunt. "It is some years since Cameron had his last musical blockbuster with *Miss Saigon*. The bad reviews and early closure of *Martin Guerre* in London have hurt him enormously. He craves another big success. His producing interests are slowing

down. But he has a substantial fortune (£350m). What does he do with it? He has one overwhelming interest - the theatre."

And so Mackintosh the producer is turning into Mackintosh the owner and programmer. While his musical tastes may have been traditional, the straight plays he wants in his theatres could be anything but.

Martin McCullum again: "Cameron knows that the important thing about programming theatres is to be in touch with what the public want

New work and new writing will play a big part."

The vision of Mackintosh-programmed theatres has led to anxiety. Martin Brown of Equity says it would be perilous if the West End did not mix new writing and straight productions from the provinces with musicals and comedies. But Mackintosh's record of bringing shows in from the provinces is good. He brought in *Five Guys Named Moe* after scouting at the Theatre Royal, Stratford East. On

the fringe, there is even some excitement at a musicals king working his magic on drama. Paul Blackman, artistic director of *The Roundhouse*, says: "If he turns his attention to straight theatre with the same success as he has had with musicals then we should all stand by our beds. It will give him a new impetus entirely."

Meanwhile, watching the Cameron-and-Janet show from the wings is another theatre landlord with a different day job, Andrew Lloyd Webber. The composer owns three theatres - the Adelphi, the New London and the Palace. Now here the story begins to get incessantly complicated. Two of Lord Lloyd Webber's theatres are home to shows produced by Cameron Mackintosh - *Cats*, composed by Lloyd Webber, and *Les Misérables*. One of Mackintosh's biggest hits, *Miss Saigon*, is on at the Theatre Royal, Drury Lane.

part of the Holmes à Court empire. She also owns Her Majesty's which is showing, seemingly in perpetuity, *The Phantom of the Opera*, produced by Mackintosh, composed by Lloyd Webber.

The plain fact is that Sir Cameron is a close friend of both Lord Lloyd Webber and Mrs Holmes à Court. And many of the huge profits they make daily from the West End are shared ones.

Nevertheless, the successful £15m bid for the Queens and the Gielgud is the first sign that while they remain good friends, Mackintosh and Holmes à Court are now in direct competition. And Lloyd Webber, though he says he wants to concentrate on composing and take a back seat from business, could find it impossible to resist joining in the power struggle for the West End.

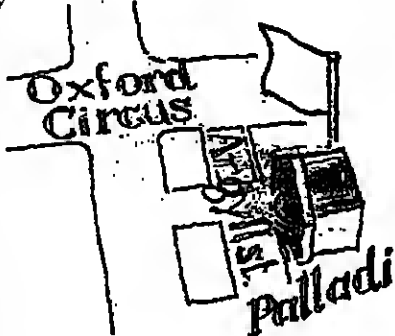
Although the rivalry between Mackintosh and Lloyd Webber has been overplayed, they watch each other's successes, failures and acquisitions closely.

Janet Holmes à Court is not prepared to sit back. According to her chief executive, Richard Johnston: "Theatre remains her abiding interest. She will be over here regularly. Her son Peter and daughter Catherine are both in the business."

She is also aware of persistent rumours that Associated Capital Theatres may be about to put its venues on the market, including the Donmar Warehouse, where Nicole Kidman recently starred.

Mr Johnston remarks: "We have been pipped at the post by Cameron on this one. But we have a remit at Stoll Moss to grow the business. Other theatres will become available. We run 10 at the moment. By 2006 when Cameron has full operation of the Queens and the Gielgud, we anticipate that we will be operating more than 10."

Battle has commenced for the soul of the West End: Cameron Mackintosh, property magnate and cutting-edge programmer against Janet Holmes à Court, property magnate and cutting-edge programmer - much more fun, surely, than producing musicals. Or being president of Australia.



Cameron Mackintosh
The 52-year-old universally popular producer began his career sweeping the stage during the sixties production of *Lionel Bart's Oliver!* By the Nineties the massively successful musicals impresario was able to re-stage *Oliver!* and give Bart a share of the royalties. He lives with his partner Michael, a photographer. No rivalry between Mackintosh and Andrew Lloyd Webber just the odd coincidence such as a 50th birthday tribute evening to Lloyd Webber at the Royal Albert Hall, followed by a show called *Hey Mr Producer* at the Royal Albert Hall, a tribute to Cameron Mackintosh.



Andrew Lloyd Webber
The 51-year-old composer is the only one of the three players with party-political leanings. He was endorsed by John Major. His music has been used in a Conservative election campaign. Stylish and sensitive to criticism, he remains unchallenged as the most popular musicals composer of the age. His business ventures took a downturn recently as some of his shows abroad closed at theatres built specifically for them. But he is still the toast of the coach parties in Britain, and could always gamble some of the losses on the horses owned by his delightful and down-to-earth third wife, Madeleine.



Janet Holmes à Court
The 55-year-old widow of Robert Holmes à Court has a vivacious informality that is not always common among owners of massive business empires. Her theatres jostle for her attention with transport, property and beef companies. The favourite to become Australia's first republican president, she is also passionate about, and involved in, improving the quality of children's television, and she chairs the Australian Children's TV Foundation. Female theatregoers should salute her: one of her priorities has been increasing the number of ladies' lavatories in West End theatres.



Too much, too soon

THEATRE
SUDDENLY LAST
SUMMER
COMEDY THEATRE
LONDON

THE GRAND Guignol opening of Sean Mathias's revival of Tennessee Williams's 1957 play augurs well. There's a deafening crack of thunder and the curtain rises on a highly stylised vision of a Southern Gothic mansion. We see, caught in the lightning, its fierce mistress, Violet Venable.

Suddenly Last Summer is uniquely pitched between the concision of a short story and the high drama of a one-act opera and Mathias quite rightly leans towards the latter. The mounting tensions of this tale about what really happened to Violet's handsome son Sebastian, who died in seemingly inexplicable circumstances, move beyond consciously overripe drama into a realm of truly violent emotions, intense even by Williams's standards. Violet has summoned a doctor to witness the "truth" surrounding her son's death. Last summer, her place on their annual holiday was taken by Sebastian's beautiful cousin Catherine who, ever since, has



Gothic: Sheila Gish, Rachel Weisz and Gerard Butler

been babbling her version of events. As a result she has been incarcerated in an asylum at Violet's expense. The dramatic stakes rise with the entrance of every character: all of them have vested interests in suppressing Catherine's story; not least Violet who, we discover, is hell-bent on persuading the doctor to perform a lobotomy. The linguistic rhythms of the play demand an almost architectural control of structure, but Mathias has focused on encouraging his cast to mine the script for the emotional subtext. This can pay huge dividends, as in his controversial interpretation of Coward's

Design for Living. But this approach denies the possibility that characters are good at disguising their true nature, and in this instance there's too much concentration on subtext at the expense of the surface text, which is subtler than it seems here. With emotions and motives laid bare from the start, everything peaks too soon, putting a strain on the play's rising emotional arc. It also ruins the tension. There is no actress I would rather see play Tennessee Williams than Sheila Gish, but even she is laid low by Mathias's approach. Instead of allowing the full horror of Violet's

plan to steal over you, Gish reveals her true nature and self-delusions from the outset, thus robbing us of Williams's surprise shift of sympathies.

As Catherine, Rachel Weisz takes her place in the sun with a powerful rendition of the full-blown aria that is the tremendously demanding final speech, but she too is cast adrift by the production. Sebastian used her to procure men, but Weisz cannot suggest Catherine's former power as, largely because of Tim Hatley's awkward design, her costume and wig fail to emphasise her beauty. Also, his replacement of Williams's suggested visual lushness with monstrous, parched symbols of death anticipates the play's climax at the expense of the earlier action.

Gore Vidal once wrote of Williams: "The best of his plays are as permanent as anything can be in the age of Kleenex." Although he is unlikely to have meant *Suddenly Last Summer*, it is potentially more exciting than this misjudged revival suggests.

DAVID BENEDICT

Booking: 0171-369 1731. A version of this review appeared in later editions of yesterday's paper

ARTS DIARY

DAVID LISTER

THE EVER-enterprising blackmailer in the new film of Oscar Wilde's *An Ideal Husband*, was one of the stars of the film not to make it to the premiere of the movie on Monday. She probably had good reasons, but it was disappointing that Cate Blanchett also failed to turn up the day after winning a Best Actress Bafta. Pressure of work, ie daytime rehearsals for *Plenty*, was the last-minute reason apparently. There's an easy option, Cate. Turn up, give the crowds a thrill and the producers some publicity, enter the cinema, drop a curtsy, then leave through a side entrance and have an early night. You won't be the first star to do exactly that. Though in fact, the film was so entertaining you might have been tempted to stay.

Back to the Baftas, there was one memorable moment, at least performance as a scheming blackmailer in the new film of Oscar Wilde's *An Ideal Husband*, was one of the stars of the film not to make it to the premiere of the movie on Monday. She probably had good reasons, but it was disappointing that Cate Blanchett also failed to turn up the day after winning a Best Actress Bafta. Pressure of work, ie daytime rehearsals for *Plenty*, was the last-minute reason apparently. There's an easy option, Cate. Turn up, give the crowds a thrill and the producers some publicity, enter the cinema, drop a curtsy, then leave through a side entrance and have an early night. You won't be the first star to do exactly that. Though in fact, the film was so entertaining you might have been tempted to stay.

Back to the Baftas, there was one memorable moment, at least

for those of us fortunate enough to be seated next to Gwyneth Paltrow's table. When host Ross made his little joke, "Where would we be without an audience - starring in *The Avengers* probably," Miss Paltrow, after a gasp of astonishment, could not contain herself and collapsed in near-hysterics. The joke wasn't that funny - unless, of course, like Miss Paltrow, you had been wise enough to turn down a starring role in the flop.

Michael Kaiser, executive director of the Royal Opera House, had a typically neat, diplomatic turn of phrase when I asked him about the infamous "dropping" of the ballerina Viviana Durante by Bruce Sansom in a rehearsal, which led to a bout of bad relations between Miss Durante and the company. "He did not drop her," Mr Kaiser replied sternly. "He put her down with excessive energy."

Miss Moore, who gives a delightfully comic

performance as a scheming blackmailer in the new film of Oscar Wilde's *An Ideal Husband*, was one of the stars of the film not to make it to the premiere of the movie on Monday. She probably had good reasons, but it was disappointing that Cate Blanchett also failed to turn up the day after winning a Best Actress Bafta. Pressure of work, ie daytime rehearsals for *Plenty*, was the last-minute reason apparently. There's an easy option, Cate. Turn up, give the crowds a thrill and the producers some publicity, enter the cinema, drop a curtsy, then leave through a side entrance and have an early night. You won't be the first star to do exactly that. Though in fact, the film was so entertaining you might have been tempted to stay.

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MUSIC

Pills, thrills and tax bills

The Happy Mondays are back and about to hit the road. A cynical Madchester cash-in? Not at all, says Shaun Ryder, it's just that it's taken everyone else 10 years to catch up with us. (OK, yeah... we need the money.) By Fiona Sturges

The first thing that you notice about Shaun Ryder is how people around him perk up. The rest of the band had been ruefully nursing colds with bottles of beer throughout their rehearsal, but following his entrance they were cackling at one another and planning the evening's entertainment. It is as if the birthday boy has finally arrived at the party.

What's more, he looks distinctly cheerful, bounding into the frame for the first round of photographs and warmly hugging his friends. This is not the snarling villain that I had expected to encounter. This man looks... well, straight.

"I am," he says, beaming. "Look, I can prove it."

Ryder pulls up his shirt and thrusts a great white belly in my direction. "Can you see the marks?" he says, pointing just beneath his bellybutton. Marks? "The marks from my implants." I beg your pardon?

"They put implants in my stomach so that if I have any opiates I get sick. Instant cold turkey," he explains. After a couple of months they wear off so I've had 12 months' worth put in. I don't get a craving or anything. I'm just a pisshead now."

After 15 years of heroin abuse, the frontman of the Happy Mondays has lost count of how many times he has been in rehab, though he insists that his brother, Paul, and drummer Gaz Whelan have suffered most since the Mondays broke up. The younger Ryder has had two nervous breakdowns since 1993 while Whelan has undergone prolonged treatment for "stress-related" complaints.

I approached this interview with some trepidation. The Happy Mondays always knew how to make journalists sweat. They were behaving badly long before style mags made it OK for boys to behave badly. They make the boorish conduct of fellow Mancunians Oasis seem pitifully small beer.

"Usually, we bring the band to London," says their PR. "That way, they are easier to control." This doesn't bode well seeing as I'm interviewing them at their Stockport rehearsal studio. Worse still, their last interview - to which they arrived 24 hours late - saw Ryder in a semi-comatose state and sporadically forgetting his whereabouts.

Today though, Ryder is razor-sharp. In fact, he is unstoppable. "I've written a movie called *Molly's Idle Ways* which is going into production next month," he boasts, adopting a faux-posh accent. "I'm acting, doing a bit of music and helping with the directing. I'm doing the tour with the Happy Mondays and a column in *The Sport*. Oh, and I've just got divorced."

Ryder's divorce is crucial to today's assembly of people. That and a fuckin' great tax bill. A messy split with Oriol Leitch, daughter of Sixties folk veteran Donovan,



Ryder has had implants put in his stomach to help him stay off heroin. 'If I have any opiates, I get sick. Instant cold turkey'

Martin Rickett

has left Ryder with no house and thousands of pounds in bills. Then came the tax bill. "It's fuckin' cleaned me out," he cries. Consequently, when "some daft sod" suggested that Ryder start up the Happy Mondays again, it was an offer that he couldn't refuse.

Four of the old members - the Ryder brothers, Whelan, plus their maraca-wielding mascot Bez - are back in the fold, though original guitarist Mark Day and keyboardist Paul Davis are conspicuous absentees. New recruits include Black Grape's Paul Wastaff, keyboardist Ben Leach (ex-The Farm) and a softly spoken singer known simply as Nuts. Just three weeks away from the beginning of the tour, the band are still trying to track down lost samples, rearrange old tracks and re-learn some of the 15-year-old songs. In short, it's a revival.

We are disrupted by a commotion at the door and Bez's distinctive vowel sounds. "Can anyone give us a tenner for a cab?" The atmosphere in the studio becomes even more excitable as Bez shows off his Adidas-sponsored threads to his pals.

In his teens Bez, aka Mark Berry, says he was "robbing, partying and being a general pain in the arse". It wasn't until he met Ryder in the mid-Eighties that he became Bez and mutated into the hyperactive cartoon dancer whose pendulous elbows, knock knees and boggle eyes became the band's trademark. Bez was also the last to rejoin the band. Word has it that it took over £50,000 to twist his arm. "Jobseeker's Allowance was on me case trying to get me to do some warehouse work," he explains. "Shifting boxes of beans or something, so I thought 'I'd bet-

ter do the Mondays thing instead."

The Happy Mondays embraced the drug-addled euphoria of the late-Eighties and were the first band to successfully put dance music in the live arena. Their rough-edged funk and infectious house rhythms, at their best on their 1990 album *Pills, Thrills and Bellyaches*, brought swaths of devout rockers into the rave scene. Tony Wilson, the band's label boss, even claimed that Ryder was the most important poet since Keats. While that point is debatable, it was certainly down to the Happy Mondays that Manchester was baptised "Madchester", with the first of the "superclubs", the Hacienda, becoming their hallowed playground.

They also came equipped with a colourful history: Stories of racketeering, spells in prison and a Herculean drug intake cir-

culated during the band's heyday in the late-Eighties, mostly spread by the members themselves. This is the band that boasted to the press about their gangster connections and bought instruments with money earned from selling drugs.

Why did they start the Mondays in the first place?

"We needed something to do in the afternoon," explains Ryder. "We found an opportunity to get into the music business and it seemed a good way to have a laugh. If we could possibly make a decent tune while we were doing it, then cool."

Even with their debauched lifestyles, the Happy Mondays were hailed as working-class heroes, lovable hooligans who could do no wrong. Their drug habits were seen as essential to their art. It was Bez's ill-judged comments about homosexual-

ity that first turned the tide of public opinion against them, though he cites other causes.

"It became a nasty little business operation, something had to give, somewhere." Meltdown finally occurred in 1992 with an ill-fated trip to Barbados where the band were recording a new album. *Yes Please*, Ryder, already battling with his heroin dependency, descended into full-blown crack addiction and took to selling pieces of their recording equipment for instant cash. The subsequent album was received so disastrously that the band's label, Factory Records, filed for bankruptcy. After a similarly catastrophic tour in 1993, the band went their separate ways.

With their legendary status as drug-users, gangsters and all-round bad boys, the Happy Mondays are perhaps the least likely candidates to join the cavalcade of comebacks. So far, revival tours from such Eighties luminaries as Culture Club, ABC, and the Human League were little more than cabaret acts. And even in the age of compulsory retro, we would be hard put to feel nostalgic over a band that still get played on the radio.

"Yeah, but this is different," says Ryder. Why?

"Cos we were 10 years ahead of our time. Everyone else is up to speed, now."

He has a point. The Happy Mondays blurred the boundaries between rock and dance long before The Chemical Brothers turned dance tunes into rock anthems. *Pills, Thrills and Bellyaches* emerged three years before Primal Scream's *Screamadelica*, often cited as the most important rock-dance album of the Nineties. The Mondays were also one of the first live dance bands to reach *Top Of The Pops*.

Ryder is keen to point out that they are not just recycling old material. "We're using some of the remixes we did in the late-Eighties, but we are doing lots of new ones. We've got a new single coming out and we've also got Nuts in to do some singing to make it more interesting."

Another album? "If we do another one, there will be a different set of rules, such as everyone gets out of the way and lets me get on with it."

This is the first glimpse that I have had of the old Ryder - stubborn and impossibly egotistical. But these aren't the Happy Mondays that we used to know. These are the rehabilitated, reconstructed version, out to make a fast buck before retiring to nice houses in Manchester's suburbs. This isn't the Happy Mondays, this is a business opportunity. And a sure-fire one at that.

The Happy Mondays play Hereford Leisure Centre on 21 April; Manchester Evening News Arena, 23 April; Glasgow SECC 24, 25 April; Brighton Academy 27, 28, 29 April

THE INFORMATION DAILY

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PAGES 15-17

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LYRIC SHEETS

MARTIN NEWELL

The US military recently requested permission to use Blur's 'Song 2' to unveil their latest 'stealth' bomber but were turned down by the band. The song has given Blur their biggest US hit to date and was recently used in an episode of *The Simpsons*



Song 2 / Wah-Hoo

But seriously,
What do you say
The day the Pentagon phones up
To say they like the vibrant sound
Of some song on your last CD
And do you think there's any way,
(a pause for breath here and a comma)
That they could use this groovy tune
To help unveil their latest bomber?

D'you ask,
"Which aeroplane is that then?
Could it be the one we saw
In big dark pieces on the floor
A handsome woman dancing on
As if it were some hootenanny
A local village christening feast
Where life continued as before
And not the outset of a war?"

Or do you ask,
"Which song is that then?"
And make the six-star general sing
The main riff down the phone at you
And get him to re-sing, "Wah-hoo!"
Until you're sick from giggling
And say it's not a disc you made
And is he absolutely sure?
Then pass him on to Pulp or Suede?

Or do you say,
"How much then, mush,
To advertise this piece of kit?"
Vorsprung durch technik on the base
Vorsprung zu chetnik in this case
But teething troubles put aside
A Pentagon/Pop Interface...
How far d'you think the thing might go?
Not very far boys. Just say no.

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THE BIG NOISE

TOM WAITS
Mule Variations Epitaph

ON HIS first album in seven years, Tom Waits surrounds himself with blues players – the guitarist John Hammond Jr, the blues-harpist Charlie Musselwhite, the former Canned Heat bassist Larry Taylor – and gets back to the land. *Mule Variations* is a Route 66 record in a freeway world, intent on summoning the ghosts of a disappearing rural past, replete with their local mythologies and suspicions. It generally proceeds at a slower pace than we're used to travelling in today's shiny pop vehicles, and the chrome is heavily pockmarked with the tarnish of geographies past.

At times the sense of decay is so palpable, you wonder whether your CD player should be fitted with a cat's whisker. But for all its lovingly distressed antiquity, it retains more life than the average shopping mall, inhabited as it is by the characterful hobos of "Pony" and "Cold Water", and carry geeks such as the "Eyeball Kid", a monocular monstrosity who "came down to teach us how to really see". The cranky, croaky blues "Get Behind the Mule" is the pivotal piece, an evocation of rural unease populated by such as Beaula, Beatty, Jack the Cutter and Jimmy the Harp. "Got to get behind the mule in the morning and plow," Waits recommends as Musselwhite's harp

walls low in the distance, before going on to offer more cryptic (and less useful) advice along the lines of "Pin your ear to the wisdom post, pin your eye to the line".

There's a convincing tang of country apocrypha about the song, a blend of the surreal and rural which Waits himself has tagged "Surreal".

It's present, too, in pieces like "Lowside of the Road", where

bespoke percussion instruments such as the chumbus and the dousengoni (who knows?) scatter potholes of awkward rhythm in the song's path, forcing it across from the sunny side of the street, and in the bizarre theological confection "Chocolate Jesus", which, recorded alfresco, includes a

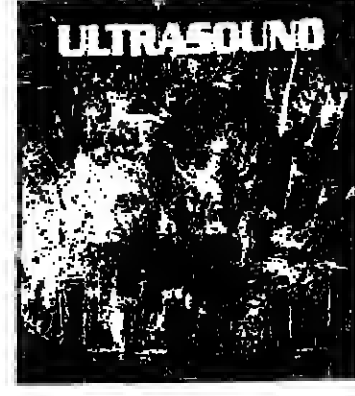
faint cock-crow, like a watermark of rural authenticity. Alongside these windblown, weatherbeaten husks are songs that hark back to other Waits compositions – "Hold On" is a first cousin to "Downtrain Train", "Cold Water" a less sentimental "On the Nickel". But they're set seamlessly within the flow of the album, like familiar footmarks to help listeners through a path overgrown with weeds. The result is another landmark album from one of modern music's most valuable talents – a man who, like the lover in "Black Market Baby", is "a diamond that wants to stay coal".

CATATONIA
Equally Cursed and Blessed
Blanco y Negro

CERY MATTHEWS has the kind of voice you either love or hate, and for me her Olive Oyl-with-attitude whine is, I admit, the closest thing to nails scraping down a blackboard. Perhaps that's what they mean by *Equally Cursed and Blessed*: they run the risk of her idiosyncratic voice repulsing potential listeners, but without it, well, they're pretty much indistinguishable from the multitude of lower-division indie Brit-poppers. It's touch and go whether last season's promotion run can be sustained another year, for this is a very dull record, its bland mélange of organ, guitar and electric piano straining to cover all available bases, but with little distinction. The stridency of the Eartha Kitt of the Valleys is softened by the inclusion of strings on some tracks, but there's little improvement in the Catatonia compositional style: the album is so freighted with terrible puns, it's sometimes hard to tell if these are songs at all. "Make hay not war", "custard's last stand", "Ladloo never sleeps, it just sucks", "Her treasured chest was sunken". It's like hearing tracks entirely composed of NME headlines.

TOM PETTY & THE HEARTBREAKERS
Echo
Warner Bros

"IT'S THE same as the same sad echo as before," sings Tom Petty on the title-track of this latest collection, his first since the *She's the One* soundtrack from 1996. He's not wrong, either: there's something warm and comforting about Petty's wry melancholy, one of rock's most dependable attitudes. The album marks a return to his forte of songs which, like the album logo, look both ways at once. Whether he's tempering a tale of struggle with a laconic aside like "She went down swinging" – like Glenn Miller, or balancing the benefits of extroversion and isolation in "Room At The Top", he has the uncanny ability to switch both sides of a story or sentiment, with enviable equanimity. He's particularly adept at conveying the cyclical nature of emotions, as in both "Echo" and the admirably upbeat depression song "Won't Last Long". The Heartbreakers are as reliably modest as ever, save for the occasional Mike Campbell solo like the dervish guitar fill in "Room At The Top". All in all, Petty's best since he joined Warner's.

ULTRASOUND
Everything Picture
Nude

SOMETIMES SIZE isn't everything, particularly when it takes a band 88 minutes to traverse a mere 11 songs. Last year's next big thing, Ultrasound have finally got around to releasing their debut album at least six months too late, and as if to compensate for having gone well beyond their sell-by date, they've made possibly this year's most irritating package – from the ugly sleeve that confounds one's attempts to extricate the two CDs, to Tiny Wood's grandiose whine, the title track's laughably "climactic" 20-minute noise-scape, lyrics which depict rock'n'roll in terms of "naked pagan glory", and pervasive melotronic strings which summon hideous ghosts of early King Crimson and ELP (not heretofore regarded as particularly naked, pagan or glorious). For all their vaulting ambition and glam aspirations – trying to grasp the fluttering coat-tails of Suede and Pulp, perhaps? – Ultrasound's music is little more than pomp-rock stodge with eyeliner, and as one horribly over-egged pudding of a song follows another, one can't help but fret over the future of British pop. Is this all there is?

ADD N TO (X)
Avant Hard
Mute

ADD N TO (X), it's claimed, take their name from a computer command that "creates an unknown third electronic force", whatever that means. Certainly, this second album shows them to be excessively smitten by the quasi-futurist allure of analogue synthesizers, which they wield with scant regard for either fun or fashion. It's a noisy job, but someone's got to do it. They're not, however, as pointlessly purist as some of their peers: rather than rely solely on electronically generated rhythms, breakbeats abound beneath juddering electric motors such as "FYUZ" and the single "Metal Fingers in My Body". They're not averse to the odd sample staling their shapely sine-waves either, most intriguingly on "Am's Eveready Equestrian". Elsewhere, the cacophonous "Revenge of the Black Regent" grows from glacial tones into a stately military tattoo, while "Buckminster Fuller" sounds like an explosion in a siren factory. The few female vocals soften their impact, in kitsch Stereolab style, but there seems little place for fleshly folk. The machines appear to be enjoying themselves, though.

B is for Bunnymen... and Bacharach

THE NEW Echo & The Bunnymen album is a brave move forward, a disavowal of the band's grand past for simple statements of ageing and regret. Unfortunately, they have also abandoned rock'n'roll in favour of pretty but unthrilling Bacharachian pop that suits the singer Ian McCulloch's increasing desire to croon like Sinatra. But it ignores his band's greatest achievement in their unlikely comeback two years ago – their honing of songs old and new during relentless touring, till

the Bunnymen who blinked back into the spotlight at Cream in 1997 had achieved a force and majesty live which few could equal. The difference between a drunk McCulloch debuting the new album's title song, "What Are You Going to Do with Your Life?", as a taunting accusation to his thirtysomething crowd at their last headline show a year ago, and its mood of middle-aged acceptance on record, tells a disappointing story. The quiet retirement of the bassist Les Pat-

erson between tours, leaving only McCulloch and Will Sergeant, invites a further question. Are Echo & The Bunnymen really still a band – or the name that ritually validates McCulloch, the Voice?

When they take to the stage, cruising on the crowd's good humour after the Newcastle FA Cup semi-final win earlier, such worries at first seem ill-founded. McCulloch swags into view from a swirl of dry ice, with ash hanging delicately from a cigarette, swathed in shiny black leather, more the perfect rock star than he's ever been before. Will Sergeant strums on his left, hidden by his fringe, and who cares? Snake-dancing and sneaking drinks from the crowd, McCulloch's recent claim

that he is the Bunnymen seems less a boast than a lucky fact. He homes in on established hits. The crowd, almost all old enough to remember the Bunnymen's heyday, danced the way they are supposed to, and watch the band do their memories justice. By "Bring On the Dancing Horses", the crowd are hurling the lyrics back, rolling back the years. The potency of the old songs seems freeze-dried. But of course, for any man who believes in his future, that can never be enough.

The crunch for McCulloch comes when "The Back of Love" is followed by that crucial new song, "What Are You Going to Do With Your Life?". He sings the old song with a voice deliberately raked ragged, bringing one of his firmest hits into his new, soft-focused world. For "What Are You Going to Do...", as when he first sang it so angrily, the audience's age should make it resonate. But somehow, the transition to this brave new Bunnymen's world falls short.



NICK HASTED McCulloch: brave move forward

Dark side of the moon

Luna make beautiful but disturbing records. But luck isn't on their side. Elektra have dropped their latest album in the States. And now they risk being upstaged by Sheryl Crow... By Kevin Harley

GOOD LUCK seems to elude Luna. Formed by Dean Wareham when he deserted the gorgeous Galaxie 500 in 1991, the New York four-piece have spread their vapour trails of spiky-sweet guitar pop and Velvet-styled sonic fidgeting across five albums already. Even so, they're still best known for their insistent cover version of Serge Gainsbourg's "Bonnie and Clyde", released back in 1995.

A tale of woe spins out from another Luna cover version. Like alchemists, they've turned the paunchy rock squeal of Guns n' Roses' "Sweet Child O'Mine" into a lightly sozzled dance track kept standing by a big drum.

Luna recorded it for a B-side, but their US label, Elektra, insisted that they put it on their new, fifth album, *Days of Our Nights*.

"Now they're not even putting our album out," Wareham spits. "Dropped, man! They said it's 'not commercially viable'. We wanted out of Elektra a while ago, partly because of this mountain of fake debt that they slapped on us. And it is fake! But the timing is bad because we'd serviced the album to the press."

It isn't Wareham's first acrimonious break-up, given that his split from Galaxie 500 was not exactly amicable. These days he communicates only by fax with his former colleagues Damon Krukowski and Naomi Yang.

"They think I ruined their lives because of ego and money," he sneers, before adding wistfully: "It may have been ego. It certainly wasn't money."

Despite jokingly basing their latest album's title on a soap opera, Luna's tensions seem to stay in the music. Their slow-burning, quintessentially New York brand of quiet melodrama fine-tunes that seductive,



Luna: the best unknown band on Earth

haunting clash between nimble surfaces and vivid instrumentation. Even a lucid wisp of a song such as "Seven Steps to Satan" cloaks the unholy coupling of a wah guitar with a digital Talkbox. Elsewhere, a choir haunts Wareham's ghostly croon thanks to the bassist, multi-instrumentalist and ex-Chills man Justin Harwood.

"Justin played the choir with his finger," Dean deadpans. "It's a sample."

Likewise, poking into Wareham's opaque lyrics can be like finding acid in your ice-cream. What sound like prisms for benevolent and gauche fragments – a quote

from a Dean Martin biography, a bit of trucker-speak, a nod to the adolescent Seventies comic-strip darlings Betty and Veronica, in "The Rustler" – often lead into tales of stalking, crazy cults, nervous breakdowns and pancake houses. Using Wareham's words, they're "softly spoken tigers". Beautiful, but prone to such casually catty swipes as "my friends all make me sick". "Superfreaky Memories", the first single, is exemplary: "The title comes from a letter this killer got from his girlfriend when he was in jail for a killing spree in Utah in the 1970s. He wanted to be exe-

cuted and he wanted her to die too, but she didn't. I hope she doesn't come after us!"

It isn't much of a worry, given Luna's bittersweet position as, in the words of *Rolling Stone*, "the best band in the world that no one has ever heard of".

Still, Wareham's quirky lyrics do boast a huddle of nascent neuroses. When his band mate Sean Eden needles him about being a hypochondriac, you wonder whether Woody Allen could have turned out like Wareham, had he nurtured a Lou Reed fixation and a smoulder to match. "I am not a hypochondriac," Wareham says, tetchily: "I just don't like being near sick people when we're out on tour."

His paranoia is understandable, given the misfortunes heaped on his band. Take their extracurricular money-spinners. Scoring a TV commercial and covering Donovan's "Season of the Witch" for the film *Shot Andy Warhol* went fine. But they also scored films destined for bargain-bin oblivion: Mr Jealousy, anyone? Thursday? "That was frustrating," Eden snorts, "because we did some good music. I thought Thursday would be cool because it had Mickey Rourke in it. It was terrible!"

Still, they could release "Sweet Child O'Mine," once they get a US label. That sold copies, the first time round. "We would need to hurry," groans Wareham, "because Sheryl Crow is doing it for a movie sound-track. People would think we copied her."

Somehow, you suspect that the terminally undervalued Luna deserve better than that.

simply irresistible

ROBERT PALMER

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When a poseur gets serious

Ivo Pogorelich is a changed man. His wife's death and the agony of his native Yugoslavia have thrown him into his work with renewed vigour. By Michael Church

The last time I met Ivo Pogorelich, the pianist was sprawled like a pasha in his baronial drawing-room in Surrey. Things were so arranged that I should quiz him from a distance, as though on bended knee. But the figure I ran into at the BBC this week looked more like a night-club bouncer: massively muscular, pony-tailed, in sports gear and, after savaging a hapless *In Tune* presenter live on air, exuding dangerous aggression. Which is the real Pogorelich? What has happened over the past three years? The conventional mad-genius theory - often applied to this passionately Croat virtuoso - doesn't cover the case.

In the Eighties, when he was one of the best-selling classical artists in the world, Pogorelich came on in white silk suits and orange scarves, and eventually disappointed his fans by marrying his (much older) Russian piano teacher. But he loved to shock by where he played (Israel, for example) as well as how, and on the outbreak of war on his home turf he turned political. He became a UNESCO "goodwill ambassador", raising funds for Croatian charities and the restoration of historic Dubrovnik.

At our first meeting he had seemed, in some odd way, to be a spectator at the ringside of his own greatness; as he presented them, all the events in his life had epic significance. Summing up his celebrated elimination from the 1980 Warsaw Chopin competition - sick, guarded by soldiers, and furiously championed by his fellow pianist Martha Argerich - he concluded: "Was I poisoned? I still don't know. But I became a symbol of political things that were to come." Then he gave a curious, disbelieving laugh.

But behind the heroic façade, I sensed a private struggle. He talked

hither of his botched pianistic beginning under bad teachers in his native Belgrade, and of his years of corrective slog at the Moscow Conservatoire. But he didn't talk at all about the family he left behind when stardom beckoned in the West. Was his younger brother, also a pianist, any good? His answer was a patronising shrug. He had sacked his family and married his mentor. Was it guilt which made him rally to the cultural defence of his homeland? No comment.

Since then, his wife and mentor Alice Kezeradzic has died. He doesn't talk about her now, but his record of Chopin's Scherzi, which Deutsche

As well as being an artist of genius, this man has a seriously analytical mind

Grammophon has just released, speaks volumes. Not only through the music, which reflects the electric excitement of their last tutor-pupil collaboration, but also through the photograph he's chosen for the liner-note. This shows a couple in the bed of their love: a powerful woman, and behind her a possessively protecting, slender youth. The real Pogorelich. It seems, is as divided as ever.

And making up for it by furious engagement in public affairs. Last week he was playing in Montreal to raise money for the project he has long championed: a new maternity clinic for Sarajevo, to replace the one shelled to bits by the Serbs. Next week he will be raising more money for that cause in Kuwait. "This will be the first-ever classical piano recital in that country. There were big problems finding an instrument, and finally they have produced one

of a brand I will not name for fear of astonishing you." For some reason this mongrel Joanna must remain a secret. He will give several performances there, including one for students and one for segregated women. "I see this as a pioneering effort," he says.

He won't be drawn on the Kosovo conflict, and stresses his continuing links with Belgrade ("I still have admirers there"). But he's deeply preoccupied with the war - "the images one sees on television throw one out of one's skin" - and with the tradition of Serb violence. "I remember the suppression of Belgrade students in 1969. It happened under our windows, and my parents would not let me watch. That is a memory I have never been free of."

"And I am worried about the Slav race in general." How so? "There is a problem with imagery and mythology with the Slav mentality." The romantically-minded Slav countries are lagging behind in the global digital revolution, "in which classical music is on the losing side".

But is not computer-rich America still producing fabulous pianists? "In 1993, there was held in Pasadena the first Ivo Pogorelich Piano Competition, which had no age limits and therefore allowed a survey of the available pianism in America. And what do you think 90 per cent of the contestants wanted? Not the \$100,000 prize money, but a hundred hours of coaching!" Clinching evidence, he says, that the wired Americans are aware of their cultural impoverishment.

Does he teach? "I don't believe in the multi-capacity of musicians. If you have the qualification to be a motorcyclist, don't drive a bus. To be a tutor takes round-the-clock dedication. Master classes are a waste of time." How well does his younger brother play these days? "I think he performs from time to time."



Pogorelich: 'I don't believe in the multi-capacity of musicians. If you're a motorcyclist, don't drive a bus'

Glynn Griffiths

Pogorelich's next London performance will be on 26 April at the Royal Festival Hall: a Chopin recital to raise cash for the destroyed museum in Vukovar, his latest good cause. The evening will include a raffle for holidays to Zagreb; not a joke, he explains irritably, for it is now one of the safest places on earth. Finally, he talks about Chopin - his experimental daring and the hitherto ignored Spanish influence on his

Mazurkas and Etudes. Then I remember that, as well as being an artist of genius, this provocative poseur has a seriously analytical mind. Will the real Pogorelich ever emerge in unambiguous form? I

doubt it. But while the records remain transcendent, and the good works bear fruit, who cares?

Royal Festival Hall, London SE1 (0171-960 4242)

THE COMPACT COLLECTION

ROB COWAN ON THE WEEK'S NEW CD RELEASES

CLASSICAL MUSIC that enters the popular consciousness is usually overheard rather than listened to. It may harbour a powerful pocket of atmosphere, or serve as a potential soundtrack for the mind's theatre; but the encounter is invariably casual.

When the saxophonist Jan Garbarek first collaborated with the Hilliard Ensemble for ECM's *Officium* in 1994, the haunting combination of early choral music and smooth sax improvisation suggested a lone jazzier loitering against a cathedral wall. It was an in-store favourite, a heady blend of the sacred and the profane: heavens-teasing and provocative on the one hand, soothing and sensuous on the other.

Mnemosyne (Memory) has a tougher edge than *Officium*: its musical material is more varied, ranging in style from a dissonant Delphic psalm, through Hildegard's ecstatic "O Ignis Spiritus" and a Tallis anthem to a Peruvian folk-song and Garbarek's own "Strophe" and "Counter-Strophe". Everything is carefully planned.

Mnemosyne is a sort of collaborative original composition that plays for one-and-three-quarter hours, and ECM's photographic presentation toys with air, earth and spirit much as Garbarek and the Hilliards do in musical terms.

Jazz is probably better listened to than talked about, though if words are to enter into the experience, no one was better qualified to use them than Leonard Bernstein. Hearing Lenny explain the rudiments of jazz is a revelation, and no matter if you already know - or think you know - the basic facts. Rhythm, melody, harmony, instrumental colouring, form - it's all there, effortlessly explained without either jargon or condescension.

Bernstein's music examples are pertinent and often highly amusing (a Bessie Smith blues classic scrubbed up as a squeaky-clean ballad) and there are a couple of additional concert items. WC Handy's St Louis blues *Concerto grosso* has Bernstein conducting and the Louis Armstrong Quintet taking a concertante role, and Howard Brubeck's *Dialogue for Jazz Combo and Orchestra* features brother Dave. But it's Lenny's spoken contribution that makes the CD indispensable.

Switching from Bernstein to the Bard, albeit via Boito's Italian-language refashioning, finds us in the company of Verdi's *Otello* and a gripping 1960 recording in which Jon Vickers offers a tortured though vocally distinctive statement of the title role. The conductor is Tullio Serafin, a master of Verdi's idiom who studied alongside both Boito and *Otello*'s first conductor, Serafin doesn't miss a trick: his is a fire tempered not by age, but by discretion, and he always gives his singers room to breathe.

Tito Gohbi portrays a resolute Iago and Leonie Rysaneck a noble Desdemona. Sample tracks 17-20 on the first disc, ending with the magnificent "Vengeance" duet. Verdi was rarely closer to Wagner, and these lovers never lose sight of that crucial connection. Toscanini's magnificent mono recording (also on RCA) is not so much displaced as supplemented.

Mnemosyne/Garbarek, Hilliard Ensemble ECM 465 123-2
What is Jazz?/Bernstein Sony Classical SMK 60566
Verdi/Serafin RCA "Living Stereo" 09026 63180 2 (two discs)

Beautiful, all too beautiful

REVIEW

JAN GARBAREK & THE HILLIARD ENSEMBLE
KING'S COLLEGE CHAPEL
CAMBRIDGE

FIVE YEARS ago, the then unlikely-sounding partnership of a Norwegian saxophonist and an English vocal quartet gave the premiere performance of the music from their new album, *Officium*, at King's College Chapel. At a time when the classical charts seemed full of monks, angels and nuns, *Officium* created a huge stir, selling 800,000 worldwide. This week it has earned a British gold disc for UK sales of 100,000.

On Wednesday night, Garbarek and the Hilliards returned to King's College for the European concert premiere of *Mnemosyne*, *Officium*'s successor. The new album, which is a double, is both longer and more varied than its predecessor, with a repertoire that spans 2,000 years, three continents and a number of different forms, from fragments of folk songs to a native American dance.

The basic pattern, however, is still the same as before: the Hilliards' sublime, rather ecclesiastical-sounding voices sing, while Garbarek intones odd, oblique shots across their bows with his saxophone.

In performance, the combination of the majesty of the venue and the beauty of the music cast a powerful aesthetic spell. The music began with silence, and the Hilliards gathered on stage (well, a makeshift platform in front of the mighty pipe organ) and then commenced to murmur. Slowly, the faint susurrus grew in volume until they began to fill the air.

When the counter-tenor voice of David James - one of the most beautiful sounds in the world - at last came in to join them, you could almost feel the whole audience catch their breath in wonder. Garbarek's first few peeps on the curved soprano sax that he played for almost all of the programme, indicated immediately the new and more sub-



Garbarek and the Hilliard Ensemble: a powerful aesthetic spell

tle role that he has chosen to play for *Mnemosyne*.

The concert followed the course of the album and it was an often entrancingly beautiful experience, although there has to be a doubt over how much pure beauty one is actually capable of appreciating. After a while, the law of diminishing returns

begins to set in and you cease to be sent into transports of delight by every new song. There's no conflict, little drama, and not much to look at once you've marvelled at the fan vaulting several times, checked out Garbarek's leonine profile and watched the Hilliards go up the nave and down the chancel. About

an hour's length would probably be sufficient, and at 80 minutes the programme was rather too much of a good thing.

The star of the show surely had to be the venue itself and the way the musicians learnt to play it as if it were another instrument, with both Garbarek and the Hilliards engineering some astonishing effects by positioning themselves at different corners of the building. The end, when it came, was a formidable coup de théâtre. As the musicians disappeared down the aisle towards the altar, the sound disappeared with them in a slow fade to pulpit.

The Hilliard Ensemble and Jan Garbarek return to the UK in November for concerts of "Mnemosyne" in Birmingham (14, Symphony Hall), London (16, Royal Albert Hall), Brighton (18, St Bartholomew's Church) and Durham Cathedral (20)

See the review of *Mnemosyne* in Compact Collection, left

ON THE AIR

ANTHONY PAYNE

COMPOSERS HAVE always been capable of responding to a blast from the past. Haydn's vision was newly focused by the overwhelming experience of hearing Handel in Westminster Abbey from a choir of totally unauthentic size; Bach's counterpoint immeasurably enriched the work of Mozart's late years; Beethoven responded as powerfully as did Haydn to the music of Handel, who was by then even more distant in historical perspective. The list is endless, and includes most creators of genius. Indeed, the ability to respond in this way without being overwhelmed is perhaps one of the characteristics of creative vigour.

In the present century the opportunities for such influential experience have increased a

hundredfold. Haydn would not have had to wait until his old age before hearing Handel - a radio or CD player would have served his needs decades earlier - although that is not to say that his hearing Handel did not occur at just the right time in his creative development. But that is another story. The point is that the incredible amount of music, going back to the dawn of cultural time, which is now available at the turning of a knob or insertion of a disc poses a crucial problem: and composers from Stravinsky onwards have had to go through tortuous stylistic hoops in order to preserve their creative integrity in the face of an increasingly available past, whether embodied in a Beethoven symphony, a Bach Passion or a

Machaut Mass. We live in an era that is obsessed with the past, a fact not unconnected with that past's well-nigh exhaustive documentation on disc. Post-Stravinskian composers are becoming increasingly aware of a greatly extended cultural heritage that somehow has to be dealt with.

It has led to a number of them writing music about other music, rather than dealing with primary thought and emotion at first hand. The resulting vision is most sophisticatedly layered, as in the *Scenes from Schumann* by Robin Holloway, broadcast live from Belfast last week as part of BBC Radio 3's *Sounding the Century*, but there exists the ever-present danger of becoming psychologically crippled by emotional dependence.

There are many different ways of falling into this trap, and often fascinating music results, as in the case of Berio's *Sinfonia*, but danger still lurks. In Holloway's case there is abundant invention and brilliant compositional virtuosity as he shifts, reflects upon, refracts, distorts and reworks ideas from Schumann's songs. There is, indeed, an exhilarating reclamation here of Romantic expression after his Constructivist earlier pieces, but allusions to a previous zeitgeist, rather than recognisable quotations, might well have been a healthier response to his needs.

Jonathan Harvey, whose deeply stirring *Passion and Resurrection* was broadcast half-an-hour later on Radio 3's *Hear and Now*, showed

equally sophisticated links with a grand tradition stretching back through the centuries. The austerity and concentration of Heinrich Schütz's Passion music had been a nourishing presence during the work's conception, not to speak of the high drama and spiritual intensity of Bach's Passions.

However, Harvey's processes may have been pressed into service - those halos in harmonics that crown Christ's sayings, for instance - quotation is not part of Harvey's compositional armoury. This superbly sustained church opera, directed with wholly committed concentration by Martin Neary, maintains a respectful distance from its models, allowing self-reliant creativity its head.

THE FRIDAY REVIEW
The Independent 16 April 1999

NEW

GENERAL

HISTORY X

THE ROAD

JOHN TALE

THE HALLWAYS

THE PAST

STATION

THE MONSTERS

THE BEAUTIFUL

THE JOE



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NEW FILMS

ACTRESSES (15, 88 mins)
Director: Ventura Pons
Starring: Rosa María Sardà, Nina Eserpi
Cult Spanish director Pons rustles up a goopy-eyed bit of cinematic navel-gazing in this ode to the acting lark. Shot back in 1997 (before last year's art-house hit, *Coroëse*), *Actresses* details the earnest research of Merte Pons's aspiring thespian - interviewing three diverse old hands (Rosa María Sardà, Nina Eserpi, Anna Lizaran) about their life and times in the greasepaint trade. Part acting masterclass, part loquacious reminiscence, *Actresses* slowly stews in an ambience of oppressive theatricality. Its performers talk as if they're being paid by the word.
Repertory: ICA Cinema

HAPPINESS (18, 134 mins)
Director: Todd Solondz
Starring: Dylan Baker, Philip Seymour Hoffman
See *The Independent Recommends*, right.
West End: Clapham Picture House, Curzon Soho, Gote Notting Hill, Odeon Camden Town, Renoir, Ritzy Cinema, Screen on Baker Street, Screen on the Green, Screen on the Hill, Virgin Haymarket

AN IDEAL HUSBAND (PG, 100 mins)
Director: Oliver Parker
Starring: Cate Blanchett, Minnie Driver
Stuffed-shirt politico Sir Robert Chiltern (Jeremy Northam) is being held to ransom by Julianne Moore's brittle blackmailier. Wife Cate Blanchett looks on in horror, while louché Rupert Everett and effervescent Minnie Driver provide the comic relief. And so it goes. Oliver Parker's film is a proficient but oddly mechanical overhaul of Oscar Wilde's still-pertinent satire of middle-class hypocrisies - the friction between the public and private sphere. The sharp dialogue is rather blurred by the snappy editing and sumptuous design, but bright playing from a starry cast helps to paper over the cracks.
West End: ABC Tottenham Court Road, Barbican Screen, Chelsea Cinema, Clapham

AMERICAN HISTORY X (18, 117 mins)
Director: Edward Zwick
Starring: Laurence Fishburne, Ice Cube
American History X is a liberal essay on right-wing fanaticism, which nonetheless indulges in some vicious Nazi chic.
West End: Odeon Camden Town, Odeon Kensington, Odeon Marble Arch, Ritzy Cinema, Virgin Trocadero, Warner Village West End. And local cinemas

ARLINGTON ROAD (15, 117 mins)
Director: Mark Pollington
Starring: Jeff Bridges, Tim Robbins
Thriller stars Jeff Bridges and Tim Robbins. West End: Warner Village West End. And local cinemas

AN AUTUMN TALE (U, 111 mins)
Director: Eric Rohmer
Starring: Jean-Claude Trépo, Jean-Claude Trépo
The final part of Eric Rohmer's *Tales of the Four Seasons* is a lovely elegiac and as warm as sunshine.
West End: Curzon Minerva, Renoir

BEDROOMS AND HALLWAYS (15, 96 mins)
Director: Kevin McKidd
Starring: Kevin McKidd, Kevin McKidd
The latest offering from *The Life School* of British film-making sees Kevin McKidd's giddy Londoner being put through all manner of romantic hoops in the run-up to his 30th birthday.
West End: ABC Shaftesbury Avenue, Clapham Picture House, Odeon Mezzanine, Virgin Fulham Rd. Repertory: The Pullman Everyman

BLAST FROM THE PAST (12, 111 mins)
Director: Hugh Wilson
Starring: Hugh Wilson, Hugh Wilson
Hugh Wilson's workmanlike Cold War satire starring Brendan Fraser.
West End: Virgin Trocadero, Warner Village West End. And local cinemas

CENTRAL STATION (15, 110 mins)
Director: Central Station
Starring: Central Station
Central Station trails Fernanda Montenegro's retired schoolteacher and her abandoned nine-year-old charge on a hunt through the backlands of Sertão for the boy's missing father.
West End: Curzon Mayfair, Ritzy Cinema

A CIVIL ACTION (15, 115 mins)
Director: John Travolta
Starring: John Travolta, John Travolta
John Travolta's ambulance-chasing lawyer takes a shot at redemption in this complex and frequently absorbing courtroom saga.
West End: Clapham Picture House, Empire Leicester Square, UCI Whiteleys, Virgin Chelsea, Virgin Trocadero. And local cinemas

THE FACULTY (15, 104 mins)
Director: Robert Harmon
Starring: Robert Harmon
See *The Independent Recommends*, above.
West End: Curzon Soho, Odeon Camden Town, Ritzy Cinema

GODS AND MONSTERS (15, 105 mins)
Director: Peter Jackson
Starring: Peter Jackson
See *The Independent Recommends*, above.
West End: ABC Tottenham Court Road, Curzon Soho, Metro, Virgin Fulham Road. Repertory: Phoenix Cinema, Watermans Arts Centre

HIGH ART (18, 102 mins)
Director: Todd Solondz
Starring: Todd Solondz
See *The Independent Recommends*, above.
West End: Curzon Soho, Odeon Camden Town, Ritzy Cinema

LIFE IS BEAUTIFUL (PG, 114 mins)
Director: Roberto Benigni
Starring: Roberto Benigni
Roberto Benigni's Oscar-winning comedy about fascist Italy and the death-camps.
West End: ABC Swiss Centre, Clapham Picture House, Empire Leicester Square, Odeon Kensington, Odeon Mezzanine, Ritzy Cinema, UCI Whiteleys, Virgin Chelsea, Virgin Haymarket. Repertory: Phoenix Cinema. And local cinemas

MIGHTY JOE (PG, 114 mins)
Director: John Dahl
Starring: John Dahl
This children's comedy is disposable Disney fluff, yet it boasts a ready charm that's hard to dislike.
West End: Odeon Marble Arch, Virgin Chelsea. And local cinemas

PICTURE HOUSE, ODEON KENSINGTON, ODEON MARBLE ARCH, ODEON SWISS COTTAGE, ODEON WEST END, RITZY CINEMA, SCREEN ON BAKER STREET, THE TRICOLEY CINEMA, UCI WHITELEYS, VIRGIN FULHAM ROAD AND LOCAL CINEMAS

PROMETHEUS (15, 130 mins)
Director: Tony Harrison
Starring: Michael Feast, Walter Sparrow
Tony Harrison's dense and literate film-poem kicks off with a visit from Hermes (Michael Feast) to a depressed mining town in Yorkshire, before moseying off through the smogstack landscapes of polluted Eastern Europe. Harrison's rigorous, locomotive verse stokes an awkward and overwrought narrative (updating Aeschylus's *Prometheus Bound*) into life, but it's still too long, too ill-paced, too heavy-handed in its eco-conscious message. Two hours in, and those rhyming couplets start to grate a bit.
West End: Notting Hill Coronet

RETURN TO PARADISE (15, 109 mins)
Director: Joseph Ruben
Starring: Vince Vaughn, Anne Heche, Joaquin Phoenix, David Conrad
Eden takes on a definite whiff of sulphur in the course of Joseph Ruben's fact-based saga, as two strutting graduate travellers (Vince Vaughn and David Conrad) are impelled to return to the scene of their former crimes when an erstwhile buddy (Joaquin Phoenix) is busted for drugs possession in Malaysia. A classic morality play in the "what would you do if?" mould, *Return to Paradise* still conspires to bungle its ready-made drama. Opening out as a taut marriage of *Midnight Express* and *The Beach*, its inherent tension seeps away throughout a pedestrian second half. A love angle between Vaughn and Anne Heche's earnest defence lawyer looks tacked on as an afterthought.
West End: Odeon Marble Arch, Virgin Fulham Road, Virgin Trocadero, Warner Village West End. And local cinemas

Xan Brooks

GENERAL RELEASE

NÔ (15, 85 mins)
Director: Robert LePage
Starring: Robert LePage
Robert LePage's third feature obliquely spotlights Quebec's push for independence in 1970 with an absurdist parallel that crosscuts between the trials of a troubled actress and her activist boyfriend. But its fascinating elements fail to get its scenes unravel: its reach exceeds its grasp.
West End: ABC Swiss Centre

PAYBACK (18, 110 mins)
Director: John Dahl
Starring: John Dahl
Based on the source novel that inspired John Boorman's *Point Blank*, this rumbling revenge thriller sees his double-crossed-and-left-for-dead anti-hero (Mel Gibson) on a mission to get even.
West End: Odeon Marble Arch, Odeon Swiss Cottage, UCI Whiteleys, Virgin Fulham Road, Virgin Trocadero, Warner Village West End. And local cinemas

PLUNKETT AND MACLEANE (15, 100 mins)
Director: Plunkett and Macleane
Starring: Plunkett and Macleane
Plunkett and Macleane (Robert Carlyle and Jonny Lee Miller) are rakish Dick Turpins cutting a dash through 18th-century society. Instead of a decent plot, director Jake Scott offers noise, colour and virtuosic pop-promo visuals.
West End: ABC Tottenham Court Road, Clapham Picture House, Odeon Camden Town, Odeon Kensington, Odeon Leicester Square, Ritzy Cinema, Virgin Fulham Road. And local cinemas

THE RED VIOLIN (15, 132 mins)
Director: François Girard
Starring: François Girard
François Girard's daisy chain of historical vignettes follows the course of a cursed violin down the centuries. Unfortunately, a thrifty-shoot budget leaves many of the period backdrops looking like cast-offs from a BBC schools programme. More crucially, Girard's bitly narrative leaves the film labouring in third gear throughout.
West End: Barbican Screen, Odeon Haymarket, Odeon Swiss Cottage. And local cinemas

THE RUGRATS MOVIE (U, 80 mins)
Director: John Dahl
Starring: John Dahl
Kids, no doubt, will eat this feature-length cartoon up. Adults should simply grin and bear it.
West End: Odeon Marble Arch, Ritzy Cinema, UCI Whiteleys, Virgin Chelsea, Virgin Trocadero, Warner Village West End. And local cinemas

SHAKESPEARE IN LOVE (15, 123 mins)
Director: John MacLean
Starring: John MacLean
See *The Independent Recommends*, above.
West End: Odeon Kensington, Odeon Marble Arch, Odeon Swiss Cottage, Plaza, Ritzy Cinema, UCI Whiteleys, Virgin Fulham Road. And local cinemas

SLAM (15, 99 mins)
Director: Robert Harmon
Starring: Robert Harmon
Even if slam-poetry's clanking rhymes make you want to "slam" the perpetrator's head in a car door, Marc Levin's drama still carries an emotional force.
West End: Metro, Ritzy Cinema. And local cinemas

TEA WITH MUSSOLINI (PG, 117 mins)
Director: Franco Zeffirelli
Starring: Franco Zeffirelli
Franco Zeffirelli's *Tea with Mussolini* is a typically loquacious tale of three dotty Brits (Maggie Smith, Judi Dench, Joan Plowright) adrift in Mussolini-era Tuscany.
West End: Empire Leicester Square, Odeon Kensington, Odeon Swiss Cottage, UCI Whiteleys. And local cinemas

THE THIN RED LINE (15, 170 mins)
Director: Terrence Malick
Starring: Terrence Malick
Terrence Malick's long-awaited return to the director's chair is a fabulous, fever-struck war film.
West End: Odeon Mezzanine, Virgin Haymarket, Virgin Trocadero

WAKING NED (PG, 91 mins)
Director: John Dahl
Starring: John Dahl
This rattle-bag of a black comedy is just too air-brushed for its own good.
West End: Odeon Kensington, Odeon Marble Arch, Odeon West End, Virgin Chelsea. And local cinemas

THE INDEPENDENT RECOMMENDS

THE FIVE BEST FILMS

Gods and Monsters (15)
A droll speculation on the last days of 1930s horror auteur James Whale (Ian McKellen), who is hypnotised by the alluring form of his Beverly Hills gardener (Brendan Fraser). Director Bill Condon won an Oscar for Best Adapted Screenplay.

Happiness (18)
Set in New Jersey, Todd Solondz's second film is a comedy of loneliness and sexual deviance that reaffirms this young writer-director's talent.

High Art (18)
A portrait of the artist as lesbian screw-up. Lisa Cholodenko's bitterly witty take on New York living (and dying) boasts one of the performances of the year from Ally Sheedy.

The Faculty (15)
Kevin Williamson does it again with this sci-fi tale of alien invaders (right). Beautiful people, a sharp script, subversive morals. Piper Laurie... Why can't all teen films be like this?

Shakespeare in Love (15)
This enjoyable, Oscar-laden historical romp suggests how romance fired Shakespeare with the inspiration for *Romeo and Juliet*. Joseph Fiennes and Gwyneth Paltrow (best actress) head an impressive cast.

ANTHONY QUINN AND CHARLOTTE O'SULLIVAN

THE FIVE BEST PLAYS

Good (Donmar Warehouse, London)
Starring Charles Dance, CP Taylor's play about accommodations with conscience is revived in a sensitive production by Michael Grandage. To 22 Mar

Gross Indecency (Gielgud Theatre, London)
The artfully fractured form of Melvyn Kaufman's compelling play about Oscar Wilde manages to present the writer in all his complex contradictoriness. Booking to 5 Jun

Forbidden Broadway (Jermyn Street Theatre, London)
Deliciously spiced and tremendously funny selection of musical theatre spoofs from Sandheim to *The Lion King* via Elaine Paige. To 10 May

Volpone (Swan Theatre, Stratford)
Comedies don't come any funnier or more astringent than Ben Jonson's brilliant dissection of avaricious, over-reaching egotism (right). To 9 Oct

A Midsummer Night's Dream (Royal Shakespeare Theatre, Stratford)
In Michael Boyd's beguiling staging, Josette Simon's Amazonian Titania is sex-on-very-long-legs and could devour Tina Turner for breakfast. To 9 Oct

THE FIVE BEST SHOWS

Jackson Pollock (Tate Gallery)
Big, revelatory retrospective for the wild hero of Abstract Expressionism (going on Old Master), legendary for his great drip paintings, but virtually unknown here for 40 years. To 6 Jun

Portraits by Ingres (National Gallery)
Some of the smartest, most intense portraiture ever (right). Men as icons of power, women as exquisite melanges of flesh and fabric. To 25 Apr

Thinking Aloud (Camden Arts Centre)
Sculptor Richard Wentworth curates this curious and cheering exploration of creativity in art, design and life: an assortment of rough drafts, doodles, try-outs and models. To 30 May

Andreas Gursky (Dean Gallery, Edinburgh)
Photographs 1994-98: huge, panoramic, high-finish, micro-detailed, digitally manipulated images of our world - stock-exchange floor, cityscape, hotel foyer. Vistas of more than the eye can see. To 10 May

Antony Gormley's 'Field' (firstsite at Roman House, Colchester)
One of the great hits of the decade: a sea of 40,000 pint-sized clay men - obedient, expectant, menacing, and stopping dead in a line at your feet. To 23 May

CINEMA

WEST END

ABC PANTON STREET
(0870-902 0404) • Piccadilly Circus
Elizabeth 11:50pm, 1:15pm, 3:40pm, 6:05pm, 8:30pm, 10:55pm
Festen 11:50pm, 1:15pm, 3:40pm, 6:05pm, 8:30pm, 10:55pm
Milly and Jackie 2:25pm, 5:55pm, 8:25pm, 10:55pm
The Opposite of Sex 12:50pm, 2:25pm, 5:55pm, 8:25pm, 10:55pm

ABC PICCADILLY
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ABC SHAFTESBURY AVE
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ABC SWISS COTTAGE
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Channel 5

6.00 5 News and Sport (S) (6730177) **7.00** *Wideawake* (2880883) **7.30** *Milkshake* (S) (2978355) **7.35** *Muppet Babies* (4) (4802624) **8.00** *Have a Snow* (S) (6736587) **8.30** *Daphne & Gino* (S) (6755888) **8.50** *Nancy Lee* (S) (6755888) **9.00** *The Op'N Window Show* (S) (5303245) **10.20** *Street Beat* (4) (6732279) **11.00** *Lezard* (5303196) **11.30** *Lezard* (5303196) **12.00** *Lezard* (5303196) **12.30** *Lezard* (5303196) **1.00** *Lezard* (5303196) **1.30** *Lezard* (5303196) **2.00** *Lezard* (5303196) **2.30** *Lezard* (5303196) **3.00** *Lezard* (5303196) **3.30** *Lezard* (5303196) **4.00** *Lezard* (5303196) **4.30** *Lezard* (5303196) **5.00** *Lezard* (5303196) **5.30** *Lezard* (5303196) **6.00** *Lezard* (5303196) **6.30** *Lezard* (5303196) **7.00** *Lezard* (5303196) **7.30** *Lezard* (5303196) **8.00** *Lezard* (5303196) **8.30** *Lezard* (5303196) **9.00** *Lezard* (5303196) **9.30** *Lezard* (5303196) **10.00** *Lezard* (5303196) **10.30** *Lezard* (5303196) **11.00** *Lezard* (5303196) **11.30** *Lezard* (5303196) **12.00** *Lezard* (5303196) **12.30** *Lezard* (5303196) **1.00** *Lezard* (5303196) **1.30** *Lezard* (5303196) **2.00** *Lezard* (5303196) **2.30** *Lezard* (5303196) **3.00** *Lezard* (5303196) **3.30** *Lezard* (5303196) **4.00** *Lezard* (5303196) **4.30** *Lezard* (5303196) **5.00** *Lezard* (5303196) **5.30** *Lezard* (5303196) **6.00** *Lezard* (5303196) **6.30** *Lezard* (5303196) **7.00** *Lezard* (5303196) **7.30** *Lezard* (5303196) **8.00** *Lezard* (5303196) **8.30** *Lezard* (5303196) **9.00** *Lezard* (5303196) **9.30** *Lezard* (5303196) **10.00** *Lezard* (5303196) **10.30** *Lezard* (5303196) **11.00** *Lezard* (5303196) **11.30** *Lezard* (5303196) **12.00** *Lezard* (5303196) **12.30** *Lezard* (5303196) **1.00** *Lezard* (5303196) **1.30** *Lezard* (5303196) **2.00** *Lezard* (5303196) **2.30** *Lezard* (5303196) **3.00** *Lezard* (5303196) **3.30** *Lezard* (5303196) **4.00** *Lezard* (5303196) **4.30** *Lezard* (5303196) **5.00** *Lezard* (5303196) **5.30** *Lezard* (5303196) **6.00** *Lezard* (5303196) **6.30** *Lezard* (5303196) **7.00** *Lezard* (5303196) **7.30** *Lezard* (5303196) **8.00** *Lezard* (5303196) **8.30** *Lezard* (5303196) **9.00** *Lezard* (5303196) **9.30** *Lezard* (5303196) **10.00** *Lezard* (5303196) **10.30** *Lezard* (5303196) **11.00** *Lezard* (5303196) **11.30** *Lezard* (5303196) **12.00** *Lezard* (5303196) **12.30** *Lezard* (5303196) **1.00** *Lezard* (5303196) **1.30** *Lezard* (5303196) **2.00** *Lezard* (5303196) **2.30** *Lezard* (5303196) **3.00** *Lezard* (5303196) **3.30** *Lezard* (5303196) **4.00** *Lezard* (5303196) **4.30** *Lezard* (5303196) **5.00** *Lezard* (5303196) **5.30** *Lezard* (5303196) **6.00** *Lezard* (5303196) **6.30** *Lezard* (5303196) **7.00** *Lezard* (5303196) **7.30** *Lezard* (5303196) **8.00** *Lezard* (5303196) **8.30** *Lezard* (5303196) **9.00** *Lezard* (5303196) **9.30** *Lezard* (5303196) **10.00** *Lezard* (5303196) **10.30** *Lezard* (5303196) **11.00** *Lezard* (5303196) **11.30** *Lezard* (5303196) **12.00** *Lezard* (5303196) **12.30** *Lezard* (5303196) **1.00** *Lezard* (5303196) **1.30** *Lezard* (5303196) **2.00** *Lezard* (5303196) **2.30** *Lezard* (5303196) **3.00** *Lezard* (5303196) **3.30** *Lezard* (5303196) **4.00** *Lezard* (5303196) **4.30** *Lezard* (5303196) **5.00** *Lezard* (5303196) **5.30** *Lezard* (5303196) **6.00** *Lezard* (5303196) **6.30** *Lezard* (5303196) **7.00** *Lezard* (5303196) **7.30** *Lezard* (5303196) **8.00** *Lezard* (5303196) **8.30** *Lezard* (5303196) **9.00** *Lezard* (5303196) **9.30** *Lezard* (5303196) **10.00** *Lezard* (5303196) **10.30** *Lezard* (5303196) **11.00** *Lezard* (5303196) **11.30** *Lezard* (5303196) **12.00** *Lezard* (5303196) **12.30** *Lezard* (5303196) **1.00** *Lezard* (5303196) **1.30** *Lezard* (5303196) **2.00** *Lezard* (5303196) **2.30** *Lezard* (5303196) **3.00** *Lezard* (5303196) **3.30** *Lezard* (5303196) **4.00** *Lezard* (5303196) **4.30** *Lezard* (5303196) **5.00** *Lezard* (5303196) **5.30** *Lezard* (5303196) **6.00** *Lezard* (5303196) **6.3**

8.30 Family Affairs. Give panic when he finds a bag of Peab's stuff, while Josh, Yasmín, Declan and Donna go busting (S) (T) (669546).

2.00 Knight Rider. Chivalry can earn from the deepsee! 1890s. David Hasselhoff stars (2627887).

7.00 Aussie Birds. Wildlife import about the spectacular diving skills of the osprey (S) (T) (6691697).

8.00 Was It Good for You? Different holiday experiences of Britanny (S) (2630242).

8.30 Nick's Quest. Nick Bekor travels around Costa Rica in search of increasingly rarer wild vampire bats (F) (S) (T) (2610652).

9.00 Film: The Heart of the Lie (Larry London 1982 US). Based on the real-life story of a Milwaukee female police officer (played by Lindsay Frost) who was sentenced to life imprisonment for the murder of her husband's ex-wife, the case being based largely on circumstantial evidence. Claiming that she was framed by colleagues who disliked her campaigning against social discrimination in the force, after escaping from prison to Canada in order to clear her name (F) (T) (2330589).

10.40 Laxx - the Dark Zone Stories. The Laxx lands on

Bill Gates exclusively on [tv]
Saturday 17th April, 7pm
Exclusive 1 hour in-depth interview, only on [tv]
[tv] - television for the 21st century
on DVD - £39.99, contact your local video hire shop